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CONSILIA.



S. W.

CONSILIA:

OR,

THOUGHTS

UPON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS;

Affectionately submitted to the CONSIDERATION

OF A

YOUNG FRIEND.

By SAMUEL BIRCH.

The SECOND EDITION,
CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

----- διδάσκει
Ὅσα χρεών ἔχ' ἐρπινότατον βίον ὧδε διάξεις.
Pythagoras.

THE SOUL'S CALM SUNSHINE AND THE HEARTFELT JOY,
IS VIRTUE'S PRIZE! ----- Pope.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, STRAND;
AND J. SEWELL, CORNHILL,

MDCCLXXXVI.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE following sheets which were originally written for private perusal, are now offered to the public. The very flattering reception, with which a candid public has honoured them, is of itself a sufficient apology for obtruding a Second Impression.

The Author, well aware that they lie open to the criticism of the world, hopes that the purity of his intention will secure him from the censures which otherwise the imperfection of them might occasion.

He

INTRODUCTION.

He does not herein boast an ample treatise upon the several subjects, for the reformation of the world at large; but merely endeavours to collect the materials, with which his little leisure has been able to furnish him, for the information of, and advice to, a Young Friend; who, with little desire to application might otherwise have been destitute of such necessary reflections.

To this end he has ventured to take up his pen, and reduce into writing, some few moral remarks on life at large, and the conduct requisite to make that life happy.

He would, however, have great reason to lament his labour, if he could for a moment suspect, that they

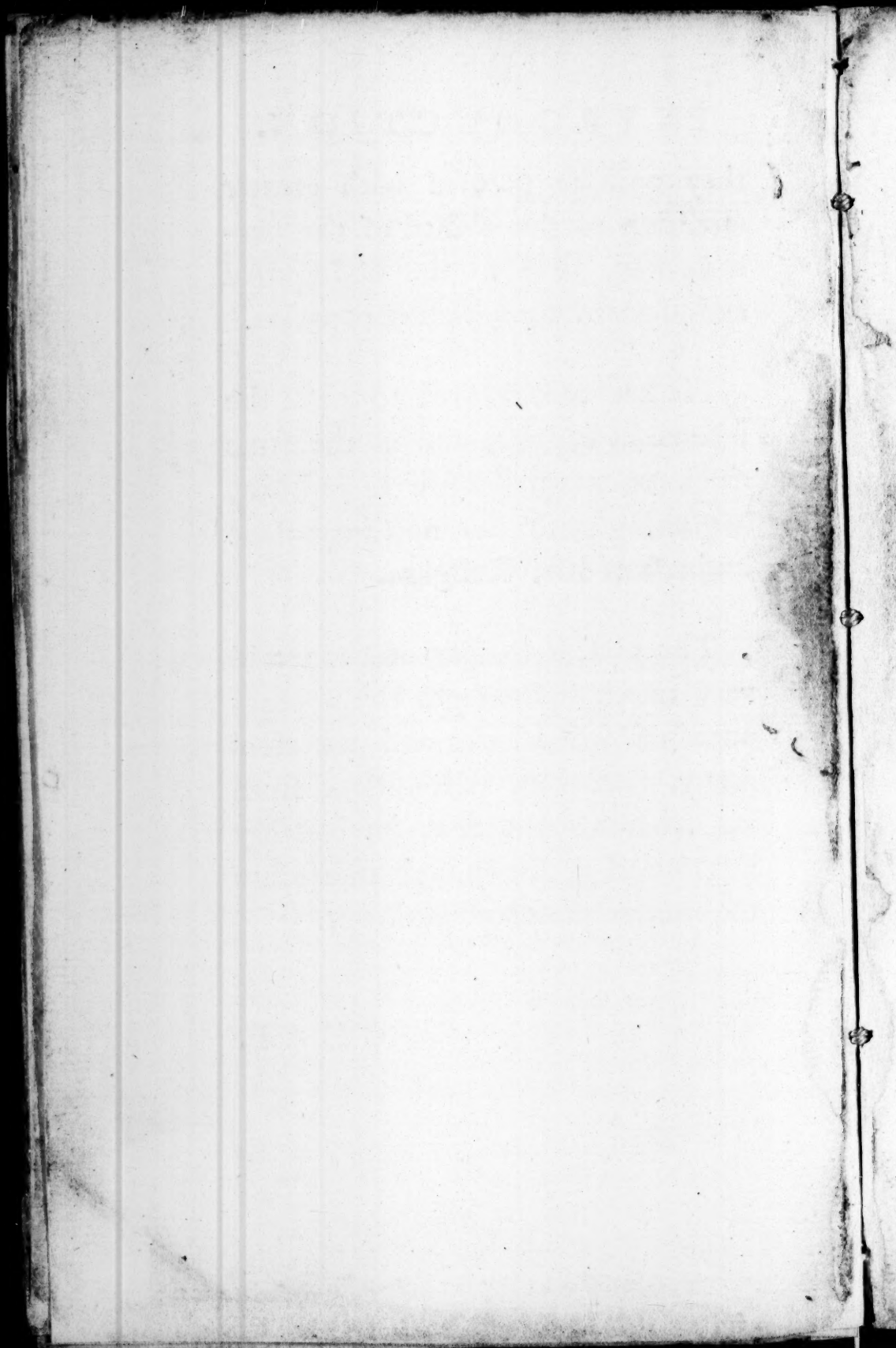
INTRODUCTION.

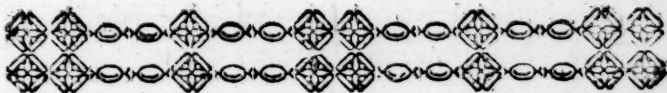
they will be perused with greater attention to the ability of the performance, than to the undisguised and plain advice which it contains.

He has endeavoured to make the scheme as concise, and at the same time, as comprehensive as possible; beginning with the most important business of life, Religion.

The present temper of the world very much discourages the appearance of seriousness, and therefore many, doubtless, will dissent from his scheme: but few, he humbly hopes will go far enough to censure the motive which produced it.

CHAP.





CHAP. I.

RELIGION. PART I.

*Homines nascuntur ut Deum agnoscant,
agnoscunt, ut colant.*

LACTANTIUS.

IT is the property of the human mind, to exercise itself in the frequent contemplation of its nature and origin. As the worship of the Creator must be the result of such contemplation, its next thought will be, what is the most acceptable mode. To this end it is not sufficient, that by virtue of custom, having the blessing of christian parents, we continue from our infancy, to celebrate one day in seven, and resort to a place of worship, without this rational and important enquiry, *whom are we here directed to adore?*

B

Is

It is indeed, our distinguishing blessing, that the true God, "the maker of all things, the judge of all men, is made manifest in every christian land; and therefore, he may be very accurately described, as to his being, providence and mercy: but those informations, considered in themselves, will avail nothing to the "forgetful hearer," without his own investigation, judgment and conviction. In order then to form a just knowledge of our employment, in the exercise of the religion we profess, we most certainly must, in our own contemplation and reason, trace it to its author, whom we shall presently discover to be GOD HIMSELF: that God, who 'till the revelation made by his Son, whose name we bear, was worshipped under the emphatic title of the "UNKNOWN GOD."

That we may be convinced of the necessity of such a religion, we must lay
aside

aside our Bible for a while, and place ourselves in the situation of those barbarous nations, who humbled themselves to stocks and stones, to their fellow creatures, and even to the beasts themselves, to worship them; we must, as they very properly in that confined state of nature did, regard the works of Providence, from the heaven above to the earth beneath, and the water under the earth, with the beauty, order and harmony of each, the immense space of the universe magnificently spangling with hosts of fixed stars, the regular course of the planets, which roll in their different orbits round the central sun, by whose beams our world is comforted and illumined; the succession and produce of the seasons, the spontaneous flower of the valley, and the vast variety of vegetative life, which croud and press upon the observation, wherever we turn our eyes. We must consider the animal creation, in all its

Religion.

extent, beauty and utility, the feathered inhabitants of air, the unseen tenants of the deep; and above all, turn our eyes upon our own frame, and contemplate the exquisite symmetry and workmanship “of this quintessence of dust,” whilst we view the apparently slender and innumerable gates of life, which wait but the permission to shut it out. What now must be the result of so serious an employment? These, and the like, were all the advantages the heathen world enjoyed for four thousand years; but from these they were naturally led to enquire into their origin and preservation, and all agreed in acknowledging some unknown power, from whom they derived, and on whom depended, their very existence.*

The

* “Thus from the consideration of ourselves,
“our reason leads us to the knowledge of this certain and evident truth, that *there is an eternal, most powerful, and most knowing Being*. If nevertheless, any one should be found so senselessly
“arrogant,

The idea of worship was natural to all, they confessed some supreme Being, though they so egregiously misapplied their adoration. Hence arose (every nation having its peculiar deities) that variety of idols, which form the heathen mythology; to each of which they attributed distinct powers and properties under the supreme Jupiter or Jove.

We must here acknowledge the necessity of rescuing mankind from such a state of darkness, respecting the Almighty;
of

“arrogant, as to suppose man alone, knowing
“and wise, but yet the production of *mere* ignorance and chance, and that all the rest of the
“universe acted only by that hazard; I shall leave
“with him that very rational and emphatical
“rebuke of Tully: *Quid est enim verius, quam
“neminem esse oportere tam stulte arrogantem,
“ut in se mentem et rationem putet inesse, in
“cælo, mundoque non putet? Aut ea quæ vix
“summa ingenii ratione comprehendat, nulla
“ratione moveri putet?”* LOCKE.

of indulging them with a clear and distinct notion of HIS perfection, infinity, omniscience, and omnipresence, WHO

“ Lives thro’ all life, extends thro’ all extent,
“ Spreads undivided, operates unspent.”

and of revealing a mode of worship, the only one indeed, which could be acceptable with God, “ who is a Spirit,” namely, “ to worship him in spirit and in truth.”* You will see the propriety of abolishing so dangerous a system of religion, which confined their deities to time and place, since without the immediate presence of the Creator, every part of nature, and every act of providence and mercy, must be at a stand.

Here then, it will be seasonable to consider, the advantages arising from the Christian dispensation; but here, as before,

* John iv. 24.

fore, it will be necessary to translate ourselves to ages past, in order to our more perfect enjoyment. With them, devoid of the glorious discoveries which now confirm our wishes, we must try what certainty of an existence beyond this world presents itself from the light of our reason. Every man had then, in as just a proportion as we have now, his reason strong, his judgment sound, and his understanding excellent; yet all these served but to distress him the more. They informed him of his intellectual part without making a future provision for it; they taught him to aspire to a futurity of comfort, and as quickly dashed it from his view; they pointed out to him his superiority over all other ranks of the animal creation, and yet could not ascertain one real, substantial, bliss beyond them.

If

If we read their poets, we shall universally find, a CONJECTURE of a future state of rewards and punishments, formed upon a variety of uncouth systems, evidently springing from, and descriptive of, the gross enjoyments or dreadful sufferings of the mortal here. If we search the wisest of their philosophers, we shall find the conjecture somewhat more refined, though not more satisfactory; we shall find it divested of the preposterous imagery of *Elysium* and *Tartarus*, and condemning, with ridicule, those false systems: but when they have done this, their superiority fails them, and they offer to you a futurity of equal uncertainty, delusion, and error.

Such was the fluctuating state of the expectation of the heathen; they evidently
“ felt the Divinity to stir within them, a
“ certain hope of, and longing after im-
“ mortality;” but this was all, it was
but

but hope, and when once they endeavoured to reduce it to any thing like certainty, their reason ran wild, and so far forsook them, that in their phrenzy they themselves pulled down the pleasing structure they had raised, and endeavoured to abolish the very ideas of it.* With what gratitude then should we embrace those comforts and advantages, which spring from the FATHER of MERCIES, who sent his only begotten Son into the world, “to bring life and immortality to the
“CLEAREST LIGHT, through his gospel,”† to purge away delusion, satisfy our reason, confirm our hopes, and establish our faith.

C

We

* Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
Atque metus omnes, et inexorabile fatum
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque acherontis avari!

VIRG. Geor.

..... caret tibi pectus

..... mortis formidine?

Somnia, terrores magicos, &c.

HOR. L. 2. Ep. 2.

† 2 Tim. i. 10.

We have now presented to us, with certainty, a futurity of pure intellectual enjoyment, without decay and without end: a futurity! which God only could reveal, God only could bestow! in exchange for the unwarranted expectation of a futurity, glowing with gross corporeal pleasures, equally subject to limitation and decay. We have left for our instruction a system of worship and conduct, which bears the stamp of its Divine Author, beyond all dispute; such as no mortal whatever could have produced: a system, wide as heaven from earth from the rules before embraced, whose amiable and leading features are HUMILITY and RESIGNATION, with respect to ourselves; CHARITY and FORGIVENESS of INJURIES, with respect to OTHERS: in direct opposition to those conspicuous characters in the catalogue of pagan virtues, REVENGE and SUICIDE.

To

To resemble the Deity in acts of mercy and forbearance, would, in their estimation, have sunk the man beneath the dignity of his station, and rendered him the proper object of their scorn and derision; weakly imputing to cowardice, what in fact bore testimony to the greatness of his soul.

A series of misfortunes or afflictions was with them a sufficient plea to exercise the latter of their virtues, and by an impious contempt of death to free themselves at once from the common calamities of life.

It was reserved for the CHRISTIAN, with patience and magnanimity, to bear up against the evils he endured, and place his confidence, without shrinking, in the mercy of his Maker. It was reserved for the CHRISTIAN to experience the exquisite sensations of pardoning

the errors and frailties of human nature, and of conferring a kindness upon the enemy, who had wronged him.

But the greatest advantage and comfort remains yet to be considered, the effectual expiation of our sins through the death of our Blessed Redeemer upon the cross. You are no stranger from having perused the Old Testament, that our first ancestor Adam, originally created pure and upright, by a direct violation of, and disobedience to, the command of God, forfeited the paradise intended for him; and that the whole of his posterity from a natural propensity to evil (to which no one in himself can be a stranger) have by repeated transgression incurred the displeasure of the Almighty. It afterwards appears, that God being desirous to rescue man from such a forlorn state, and in process of time, having selected the children of Israel, as
his

his own peculiar people, from the rest of the world, instituted amongst them prayer, various sacrifices, and the shedding of blood for the remission of sins; and from time to time renewed his promise, which was originally made to Abraham, for his singular obedience, that “in his
“ feed all the nations of the earth should
“ be blessed.”*

By a close application to the history of the Old Testament you will discover, that it was the Messiah, which is our Saviour, of whom this was spoken; who, by the one oblation of himself once offered, was to expiate the sins of all nations upon earth, who should believe on him, and follow his steps. You now perceive, that sin had entered into the world, by Adam being tempted to the disobedience of his Maker’s law, and that, by such a crime, he subjected all his race

to

* Gen. xxii. 18.

the natural depravity of mind, and inclination to evil, which we all possess:* and that some remedy became necessary to avert the wrath of offended God: the shedding of blood in sacrifice seems to have been almost the universal one throughout all nations, independent of the Jews, who were immediately instructed by heaven to that end. They looked for signs and wonders, they consulted their trees as oracles, and sought to deprecate their offended deities by deluges of blood,† and have gone so far as to offer up their own progeny in sacrifice.

After

* Rom. v. 19. By one man's disobedience many were made finners.

† Hic Helenus cæsis primùm de more juvencis,
Exorat pacem divum. VIRG.

.....
Sacra Dionææ Matri, divisque ferebam
Auspiciis captorum operum; superoque nitentem

Cælicolum regi mactabam in littore taurum.

Ibid.

After the world, four thousand years since its creation, had been thus fluctuating in opinion and error, the glorious period arrived, when all the world might come to the knowledge of the truth, when the one great sacrifice for sin WAS OFFERED : an interest in which the meanest might have his share, and by none other interest could the most exalted have access to his Maker.

Here, we may naturally pause, and contemplate who it was that delivered himself up, and was accepted a sacrifice for the sins of mankind. No created being could be equal to this important work, neither angel nor man. It was none other than " God himself manifest " in the flesh.* God who created the world, condescended to redeem it ; God the Son, who, as St. John has expressed it, " came unto his own, and his own " received him not."

" Were

* 1 Tim. iii. 16.

“ Were we to consider,” as a learned prelate has remarked,† “ ONE person as
“ OUR CREATOR, and ANOTHER as our
“ REDEEMER, it would be extremely to
“ the diminution of the honor and regard due to the Creator, inasmuch as
“ the blessing of REDEMPTION would
“ greatly outweigh the benefit of CRE-
“ ATION, and it would be natural to us
“ to prefer the love which DELIVERED
“ US FROM the evils and miseries of the
“ world, to that which PLACED US IN
“ them. The work was such, that no
“ person of LESS power could undertake
“ it; and his relation to the world was
“ such as made it fit and proper to com-
“ mit the work to him.”

His life was the model of his precepts, not his precepts of his life, so invariably did his actions accord with his exhortations.

There

† Bishop Sherlock.

There is another singular advantage attending this heaven descended dispensation, which is, that it compleats the plan it forms. We are not entertained with an ideal hope of a future life, “ he “ is not only the author but the finisher “ of our faith :”† and he has not “ left “ us comfortless,”§ but given us the strongest evidence we can possibly have, of his power to perfect his promise, by raising himself from the dead, and proving himself to a demonstration, the LORD OF LIFE and GLORY, and consequently *able* to save us.

If we want other evidence, we must refer to the prophets, who, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, so repeatedly and accurately prefigured the most conspicuous lines of his character, and the most remarkable circumstances of his life: to the miracles which he wrought,

D

to

† Heb. xii. 2.

§ John xiv. 18.

to his own prophecies, fulfilled and still fulfilling; to every page of the sacred evangelists, whose artless description and unaffected simplicity proclaim their sincerity, and challenge at once our astonishment and our faith. Add to these, the whole army of martyrs, who sealed their testimony with their blood.

It is now nearly one thousand eight hundred years since this glorious event took place at JERUSALEM, since that SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS, which had gained strength, age after age, in the glimmering of prophecy, and typical representation, arose upon the heathen world in his meridian lustre, with healing under his wings.

To turn back upon what has been mentioned will afford a picture of the most exalted and interesting nature; for it now opens upon us in all its beauty and

and extent. Man, in the first instance, fallen from his primary dignity, at the mercy of his own distracted thoughts, and given up to sensuality, idolatry, and destruction: in the next, an *universal sacrifice* in the sacred person of the SON of GOD, bleeding upon the cross, thereby abolishing the objects and consequences of superstition, and reconciling the guilty creature to the insulted Creator: finally, to view him ascended to his glory, “ opening the kingdom of Heaven to all “ believers, having destroyed the power “ of the grave, and LED CAPTIVITY “ CAPTIVE.

Christianity having been thus established, it may be necessary to enquire, whence it comes to pass, that so many sects and different opinions, respecting the SAME RELIGION, should exist. And indeed, it is much easier to lament, than

to account for it: however, we will endeavour briefly to do this.

The apostles, and the disciples, who were but few in number, almost immediately after our Lord's ascension, and the descent of the Holy Ghost,* severally dispersed to preach the sacred truths, with which they were intrusted: one should have supposed, that during the lives of the apostles, and their successors, at least, their converts would have remained unmoved, and settled in one consent, upon so reasonable a doctrine and service: but, such is the nature of the mind of man, so delighted is it with novelty, that, we find, before St. John wrote his gospel, some dangerous opinions had prevailed amongst the disciples, which occasioned the very remarkable beginning of his gospel, in order to establish beyond dispute, the important
faith

* Acts ii. 1, 2, 3, &c.

faith of the TRINITY. St. Paul likewise complains to his converts of the false notions scattered amongst them† tending to destroy the very genius of his preaching, the “unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace.”§

Numerous were the difficulties, which these first “fowers of the word” had to encounter. To conquer the power of habit, the prejudice of education, the science of philosophy, which was at the zenith of its lustre, to contend with the jewish priests, who, to justify their proceedings in crucifying the PRINCE OF PEACE, would doubtless leave no argument or exertion untried, which was likely to crush this infant doctrine; and above all, diametrically to oppose the pleasures and vanity of the world, were obstacles apparently insurmountable. But they

† 1 Cor. i. 10, 11, &c.

§ Eph. iv. 3.

they gloriously and unremittingly persisted in their cause, endued with power from on high, 'till persecuted by the Roman power they sealed their doctrine with their blood.

In this situation we find the Christian church, bishop succeeding bishop without dismay, blameless in their lives, and stedfast in their faith, amidst scorn, contempt and affliction. Congregations in every Roman province, the habitable part of Asia, and increasing without bounds, wherever the faithful teachers were sent. It was not till the fifth, or near the sixth century, that the bishop of Rome arrogantly assumed an illegal supremacy over his fellow pastors,† and in process of time, aimed at the secular government of princes as well as subjects.‡ Good Heaven! that a teacher of such a religion,

† Innocent I. 5th Century.

‡ Gregory VII. 11th Century.

religion should, through the blindness of his pride and ambition of his heart, almost deprive mankind of the blessings of it; and endeavour to plunge them into their original ignorance. That a teacher of such a religion, a disciple of such a master, after the meek example of the immediate descendants and successors of the apostles, and the remarkable simplicity, for which the Christian cause was in its purity renowned, should (forgetting or stifling, the very soul of his exalted station, which was to be a conspicuous **PATTERN**, as well as **PREACHER**, of meekness and patience) endeavour to establish a temporary royalty, in direct defiance of that remarkable caution his Saviour had left him, “ my kingdom is “ not of this world.”*

Though several emperors, at this early season of Christianity, embraced and defended

* John xviii. 36,

fended it; yet, the gradual decay of the Roman empire, which now began to be but too visible, was a serious impediment to the rising preachers of the newly established religion, and but for the "sure word of prophecy," must have been fatal to it. Those accomplishments which adorned the conquests of the Romans, and the perfection of science which had dignified their state, in such extent, were gradually swept away by the barbarous nations which defeated them; and the close of the sixth century could not trace a vestige of that exalted nation's government, or its laws.† Here was again a scene of melancholy indeed! That light, which for a while had raised mankind, with certainty, beyond the fetters of mortality, which had afforded them a distinct, though distant, prospect of a future existence, and the objects of their veneration, seemed to be again withdrawn.

Between

† Robertson's Hist. Charles V. vol. 1.

Between four and five hundred years was the glorious luminary of the gospel eclipsed by the dismal return of ignorance and superstition.

To these dark ages (as they are very justly termed) is to be attributed the birth of those monstrous deformities, which crept into the church, and do to this day disgrace THAT OF ROME; such as, the doctrine of indulgencies, partial absolution, transubstantiation, the creation and worship of saints, purgatory, monastic seclusion, &c.

When these numerous species of magic were introduced into a religion, whose distinguishing province was calculated wholly to destroy them, and when they had moulded it to their purpose, from the advantages of ignorance on the one hand, and the artful concealment of the Bible on the other, what wonder, if

E

men

men of such a stamp were conscious of their power, and improved it as they found occasion, with such artful success, as to acquire the veneration, if not adoration, of those who heard them? What wonder, if numbers should assume that sacred office, when they were thereby privileged to commit in safety the most atrocious crimes; the clergy having the address to rescue themselves from the common laws, and to institute an ecclesiastical form of justice among themselves? In short, can we wonder that few, if any traces of the pure religion of Christ should be preserved, when an uninterrupted scene of voluptuousness, immorality, and licentiousness marked the *lives* of its teachers?

So swift was the extinction of knowledge, and its revival so impeded, that persons of the greatest eminence in point of station could scarcely read and write; they

they had not an idea of investigating the truth through the intricacy of evidence ; but pursuing a line of conduct clearly consonant with their ideas of religion, had recourse to heaven, by the appeals of fiery ordeals, hot water, burning plough-shares, &c. imagining heaven would vouchsafe them signs on every occasion, till one superstition gave birth to another. Hence arose the custom of duelling, champions, &c. in order to establish the authority of what they asserted. The clergy themselves, who engrossed what little science was remaining, could scarcely translate the Liturgy, and when ordained, were expressly obliged to affirm that they could read the Gospels and Epistles, and explain them.*

The pride and insolence, on the other hand, of the bishops of Rome had gained so disgraceful an ascendancy, that it is

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recorded

* Robertson's History Charles V. vol. 1.

recorded of Gregory the VIIth. that an emperor was obliged to appear a suppliant in the gate of his castle, three days barefooted in the depth of winter: and St. Jerome notices a remarkable reply of a pagan, " Make me a bishop of Rome, and I will immediately become a christian."

We now come in sight of that glorious æra, which was to disperse the clouds and darkness, and destroy the spell; the REFORMATION, effected in the sixteenth century by the pious labours, and unwearied studies, of those bright characters, which form the CONSTELLATION of the Christian world, ERASMUS, LUTHER, HUSS, JEROME of Prague, &c.; and, as it should seem the particular act of Providence to facilitate their labours, and extend their influence, we find but half a century before the days of LUTHER, the science

science of printing was discovered, and not long before that, the making of paper.

The Name of PROTESTANT originates from that body of Christians, who subscribed to the tenets of *Luther*, and PROTESTED against a decree of the imperial diet, in the reign of the emperor Charles V. 1529.

This indefatigable reformer, having the way somewhat cleared for him by *Erasmus*, had the happiness to discover a copy of the Bible in the neglected library of his monastery. From so valuable a discovery the talents and application of this great man were called forth into more than ordinary exercise; and he quickly drew aside the veil, which had concealed the rooted errors and abominations of priesthood, and exposed the craft and artifice, which had deluded the disciples,

disciples, and disgraced the doctrine of the cross. He recommended the study of the ancient Greek and Roman authors, in order that mankind might inform their reason, and thereby judge of the cause, in which he engaged, and which lay open to their examination.

Unawed by persecution, he proceeded coolly to examine into the several pretensions and inventions of the church of Rome, and overthrew them.

He asserted and proved that monastic retirement, if not contrary to, was nowhere required by, the laws of God: and proposed to the *Elect*or of Saxony, by whose permission he reformed the several churches within his dominions, to expel all abbots and monks, and to convert the convents of mendicant friars into public schools and hospitals. He proceeded to expose all the absurdities and
super-

superstitions of the Romish Church, and had the satisfaction to see his cause prevail, which extended from Upper Saxony, through most of the northern provinces, the dutchies of Mecklenburg, Brunswick, &c. all along the Baltic, as far as Prussia and Livonia.

IN ENGLAND, the PROTESTANT cause began to take effect, for in the year 1534 KING HENRY having taken offence at some proceedings of the pope, condemned his supremacy as much as he had before espoused it: and the parliament proceeded to renounce all subjection to the see of Rome, to abolish all monasteries, and above TEN THOUSAND MONKS AND NUNS were discharged: the Bible also was TRANSLATED and printed in English.

In this advancing state of purity, the execrable and direful reign of QUEEN
MARY

MARY began, crimsoned öer with the guiltless blood of martyrdom, and big with persecutions beyond the barbarity of the pagan world. The holy and reverend persons of the bishops were dragged to the stake, and their bodies were consumed amidst the acclamations and insults of the populace. A combination of persecution about this time took place throughout Europe to crush the *Protestant Interest*, but all in vain.

Five dreadful years were the allotment of Providence to so barbarous a reign, when our gracious Q. ELIZABETH confirmed what was before begun. Though many powerful attempts (particularly the Spanish Armada, in queen Elizabeth's reign) were made to overthrow it, none were able so much as to effect an impediment, till the reign of James II. who would fain have restored the papal power. But at this auspicious season, the *Prince*
of

of *Orange* came over to our rescue, when *James* abdicated his throne, and the prince and princess were proclaimed king and queen of these realms, by the title of *King William* and *Queen Mary*, which event is called the REVOLUTION.*

From that season until this we, for our comfort, have the privilege of a PROTESTANT KING secured to us by the statutes of parliament, and most European nations are daily witnesses of the swift declension of the church of Rome amongst them. Some of them at *present*, have the blessing of an emperor, who, with a liberality which alarms the papists beyond belief, has resisted their intreaties, and seems inclined to tolerate, if not establish, Protestantism.

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We

* About this time, 1687, the protestant cause was fully established in all parts of Germany, where it was professed.

We may safely here assert, that the Christian religion has already made its progress over half of the known world.

RELI-

RELIGION. PART II.

Cognitionem rerum, aut occultarum aut admirabilium, ad beatè vivendum, necessariam ducimus. Cicero de Officiis.

I Have thus far endeavoured to afford you a general idea of the nature, and present establishment of the religion into which you have been happily baptized; and however, others *strenuously* and *conscientiously* have endeavoured to establish a *purser* form, nothing can give us a clearer evidence of the danger and insufficiency of such an attempt, than the *multiplicity* of sects into which *these* are *subdivided*.

It is no part of a Christian's duty illiberally to descant upon the opinion of others. We certainly cannot do amiss, if we cordially adhere to the precepts which our church affords: she has divested her-

self of the glare of superstition, and the pharisaical boast of infallibility, and placed the Bible undisguised in our hands. Without affecting enthusiasm, she glows with a sacred and uniform warmth, which will at once exalt the imagination and affect and reform the heart.

To expatiate upon the several duties of religion, is beyond the compass of my scheme; I cannot, however, pass by, unnoticed, the *most obvious* part of our duty, and which is most shamefully disregarded: I mean the receiving of the EUCHARIST; a measure to which we are not merely *exhorted*, but *positively commanded*, by our Saviour, the night before his crucifixion.

It is, of all other neglect, the strangest and most criminal, surely, to forsake an ordinance so obviously right in itself, so positively and affectingly commanded by
our

our DYING LORD, so seriously delightful in its observance, and so *beneficial* in its consequence! Is it so terrific an undertaking to approach the table of a Redeemer, who only there reminds you of your obligation to him, and that he still lives to make intercession for you? Is it so unreasonable an employment, to acknowledge benefits received, and sins committed? What less do you in the ordinary service of the church? Is it so alarming a trial to repent of sins, and have those sins forgiven? Are you afraid of becoming better, or do you imagine the method prescribed is full of difficulty and distress? Did a Saviour condescend to bleed for your safety, and are you ashamed to confess him and accept it? What impediment is there yet in the way? What gloom or distraction depresses the desire, to partake such "his
" inestimable benefit?" Look now into the gospel, examine without apprehension

sion into the institution itself, is it not all the very soul of tenderness and affection? "DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME!"* Are these the words of anger or of love? Do they most resemble the sentence of a judge, or the requisition of a friend? Gracious heaven! must we be afflicted with sickness, before we are willing to acknowledge and enjoy the blessings of health? Must the melancholy day arrive, when our Bibles shall be forced from our hands, ere we know sufficiently to prize them? The days have been, when persecution blazed abroad, and our ancestors were denied the perusal of the sacred scriptures: *they* felt their loss, and gloriously expired to restore them to their posterity. Mark our gratitude! We receive them with indifference, and obey them with reluctance; we suffer them to moulder in security, and in *our conduct* at least question their *importance*?

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* Luke xxii. 19.

It is now time to look a little to their *authority*. I have endeavoured to point out the *natural* impulse of mankind at large, to religion, the *necessity* of the *Christian Dispensation*, its *advantages*, *comforts*, and *truth*; its *progress*, *extent*, *abuse* and *reformation*. There is one point which is not the least material, its *authority* is of God. It is not only that the world cannot afford another religion acceptable with HIM: but that *this must* be embraced and obeyed! God has not vouchsafed to reveal himself to us, to offer us pardon and acceptance, and “to guide our feet into the way of peace,” for the trifling purposes of exercising our *speculation*, and gratifying our *curiosity*. His promises and denunciations are not idly to be believed or rejected, as a mere matter of choice. Both will most assuredly take place, we have his gracious word for it, with or without our belief or consent. He has not in accommodation

tion to our station, as accountable creatures, given us a reasonable service, that we may approve and model out to ourselves what portion of it we please, and refuse the rest. He has, highly suitable to his *dignity*, claimed an exact observance of the stipulations he has been pleased to propose, at the peril of incurring the punishments he has threatened: and, highly suitable to his *mercy*, has offered his pardon and grace, whenever we chuse to apply for it.

What then must be the conclusion of the whole? We are truly sensible of the necessity of religion, and we have most unquestionably the *purest* religion in the world to resort to: if we despise it, or what is nearly the same, if we neglect it, what follows? It will not be placed *merely* to the score of inattention, idleness, or folly; we cannot plead want of information, or that we have inadvertently

tently mistaken our road; we cannot plead, that its requisitions were beyond our strength, or that they were destitute of justice and compassion: if so, we may clearly infer, that INFIDELITY or DISOBEDIENCE will not be imputed as an *error of the understanding*, but as a *crime of the HEART*,

Before I take my leave of the subject, you will permit me to say a word or two, with respect to the *external* of our religion. An uniform chaste deportment is certainly as indispensable a part of the Christian character as the uniformity of the mind. What I would caution you against is *affectation* and *ostentation*: the affectation of piety, which you *have not*, and the ostentation of that you *have*. Both will be suspected. I would not be understood here to discourage that dignity of conduct which must necessarily accompany a *faithful* adherence to the

principles of your profession. The world from recorded experience, look with a suspicious eye upon the *outward* sanctity. The *semblance* of religion has too frequently occasioned the pious to grieve, and its adversaries to rejoice. It cannot but excite our wonder, that the express meaning of Scripture should be so wrested as to countenance an extravagant contempt of the necessary business of life, and those connected with it: a *passion*, which we observe in many who profess themselves *Christians*. With the most unconquerable aversion to the most innocent enjoyments of life, which are indulged us, to sweeten our toils, and to trace the beneficent hand that sends them, we shall discover such characters, altogether regardless of the most obvious duties, not only “of the things which are lovely and of good report,” but of those “which are just and honest.”*

On

* Phil. iv. 8.

On proper occasions, to assert the dignity of your profession, by an *obstinate attention* to its *principles*, is laudable and becoming: but to affect a pharisaical display of sanctity upon all occasions, is no where required. The religion which is to avail us, is that of the HEART. On the other hand, be scrupulously careful to chide the first suggestions of fashion or indolence, which would entice you to the irreverence for, and neglect of, the *public* testimony of your principles. Whilst you disclaim the PHARISEE, forget not the PUBLICAN; and though a preference was paid to *his* prayer, on account of its secret sincerity and retir'd humility, yet remember *that* prayer was offered in the TEMPLE.

It is a circumstance of equal, if not greater reproach to the Christian world than what I have above mentioned, that its professors run into the other extreme,
and

and lest they should be accounted *religious overmuch*, industriously avoid every opportunity of appearing *religious at all*. Hence our churches are in a degree abandoned, and of those who do attend on divine worship, how few are the number, that consider as they ought the very interesting business in which they are engaged.

I can only observe, that to a bad man no employment can be so useful, and to a good man none so delightful. Never be prevailed upon by any trifling event to neglect the celebration and true enjoyment of the Sabbath. Be assured there will always be found time enough, if properly managed, for your secular engagements and pleasures in the six days allotted for them ; perhaps little enough in the short interval of the seventh, however improved, for the infinite concern and delight, of which it is intended at once the type and preparation,

Of

Of your deportment at the house of God, the only rule I will mention is the *recollection* of your *employment*. If the awful idea of the MAJESTY you are addressing, the serious solicitude for your temporal and spiritual welfare, which you are imploring, and which none but his power can withhold, none but his goodness can procure, will not so rivet the attention and adoration, as to preclude the indecent ceremonials of acquaintance, and the more trifling remarks of vacant folly or prevailing fashion during service; it is to be feared no rule or instruction will avail; for precepts cannot increase the fervour of the prayer, or give devotion to the bending knee. The two *extremes*, which I would press you to avoid, are these, being ASHAM-ED of your religion, and being OSTENTATIOUS of it.

The same lips, which uttered “who-
“ soever is ashamed of me, and of my
“ words,”

“ words, in this adulterous and sinful
 “ generation, of *him* also shall the Son
 “ of Man be ashamed, when he cometh
 “ in the glory of his Father,”* have
 likewise said, “ the kingdom of God
 “ cometh not with *observation*;†” “ thou
 “ shall not be as the *hypocrites* are, for
 “ they love to pray standing in the sy-
 “ nagogues, and in the corners of the
 “ streets, that they may be seen of men;”
 but on the contrary, “ when thou
 “ prayest enter into thy closet,‡ and when
 “ thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy
 “ Father, which is in secret.” “ Let
 “ your light *so* shine before men,”§
 What light? not the precarious flash of
 superficial piety, but the substantial and
 steady light of internal goodness, which
 was *so* to shine before men, to *that par-*
ticular end, that they may see your *good*
works, those *fruits* of your faith, by
 which

* Mark viii. 38. † Luke xvii. 20. ‡ Matt.
 vi. 5 and 6. § Matt. v. 16.

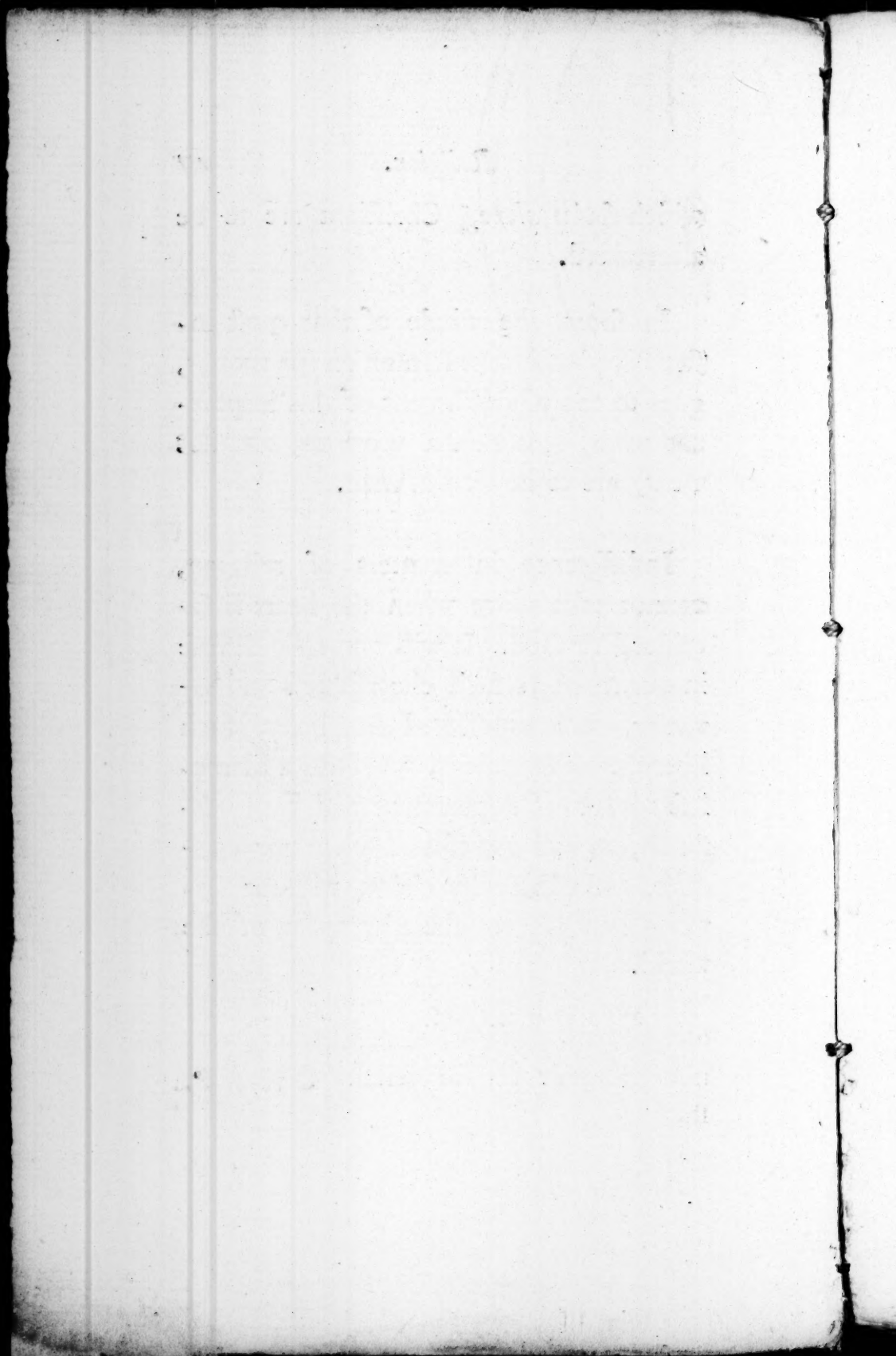
which fruits *alone*,|| Christians are to be ascertained.

In short, the whole of that most instructive lesson, the sermon on the mount, goes to the establishment of this important truth, that **YOUR WORKS**, and not **YOU**, are to be seen of men.

Indifference in matters of religion, cannot take place when the heart is sacrificed to God. It will naturally diffuse in our manners such cheerfulness and vivacity, such unaffected simplicity, such liberality of sentiment, and such a blameless tenour of deportment and conversation, as will correspond with our conduct, and effectually claim, without servilely bending to, the admiration of the world.

|| Matt. vii. 16.

CHAP..





CHAP. II.

AFFECTION

AND

BENEVOLENCE.

*Cari sunt Parentes, cari liberi, propinqui,
familiares; sed omnes omnium caritates
patria una complexa est. Cicero.*

AMongst all the moral virtues, which at once adorn and delight the heart, THESE surely must be esteemed the first, as extending to all those finer feelings of the soul, which awaken with our very existence, pass with us through life, and are designed to constitute a very material part of our felicity in a future state.

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These

These we may trace from our very childhood to the last stage of life; *first*, that love which is instinctively expressive of the gratitude due to those, who have the care of our infancy: we then find it accompanying us, however partially, amidst the circle of our coæval companions, whether as linked to our friendship by the tie of nature, or the bond of sympathy. It keeps advancing with our years, our passions, and our obligations, excited by similarity of temper and disposition, and a desire to extend our good wishes and services to those about us: until the decline of life has inclosed us, in a variety of affections peculiar to itself.

If we for a moment consider, we shall perceive that to be happy ourselves, as well as to communicate happiness to others, entirely depends upon an unchecked indulgence of the several affections of the soul, whether they assume
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the titles of tenderness, love, compassion, gratitude, &c. according as our years, situations or circumstances require.

What is it that guards our infancy, which, God knows, is more helpless than that of the lowest order of created beings, satisfies its wants, gratifies its wishes, instructs its ignorance, and fosters its dawning reason? — What is it that in childhood delights, amuses the fleeting hours, calls forth the little exertions of kind offices, one towards another, and awakens the first symptoms of the soul of sympathy? — What is it, that in approaching manhood affords the most delectable view of this world's good, answerable to its wants, and consolatory to its distresses, extending its influence to the utmost extent of either, increasing and strengthening with our years and infirmities, nor ceases till its last melancholy office has deposited us in the dust?

Cease

Cease, did I say? I would not offer it such violence; with religious solicitude it now blesses our memory, and protects our good name, from the envy or slander of malicious tongues, translates, or rather continues its kindness to our offspring, or our connections, and thus interwoven with youth and age *reciprocally* blesses and is blessed. What can afford these advantages, not to say, these necessities, in a life of society, but that *universal sympathy* and *benevolence*, which, being implanted in our nature, become *mutual debts* we are bound to discharge.

How must that principle then debase and impoverish the mind, which contracts its feelings within the narrow circle of its own concerns, and casts fetters around the liberal ideas and gratifications congenial with it! Can one behold a character with patience living only for himself, pleased only at *his own* prosperity,

rity, vulnerable only by *his own* calamity, industrious to procure his *particular* comfort, or to avoid his *particular* misfortune? Can one behold such a character, sickening at another's good, or at best, hearing it without pleasure, and not be filled with indignation? Devoted, as the world too much is, to self-love, and estranged, as it too much is, from benevolence, no character of this die, ever passed through life with respect, or sunk into the grave with pity.

Friendship, as a virtue, has by authors been described rather as what it ought to be than what it really is: for my own part, I humbly conceive, that, although friendship may in many cases be totally *disinterested*, yet there is but a scanty portion of virtue in the world, which has not an eye to *some reward*. If this is an error, it is natural, and at most reveals to us, that we cannot be perfect
here,

here. Take away the innocent rewards, which the intellectual part of our nature reasonably looks for, and you rob society of half its blessings : you immediately extinguish the several virtues of obedience, duty, respect, and gratitude. Interest, such as this, loses its stigma, and becomes a necessary *incentive* to the discharge of every duty, whether *instinctive* or *enjoined*. We will try an instance or two.

The *parent* feels no small degree of comfort in *reversion*, and enjoys some pleasure, superadded to his natural bond of love, when in the delightful employment of nurturing and protecting his offspring, he considers himself planting, as it were, an hedge about him, to be his *future* protection against the storms of life, his *future* assylum in the hour of infirmity and distress.

The

The *friend*, who, by conferring a kindness, rescues his neighbour from necessity or ruin may be, and doubtless in many cases is, free from the sordid expectation of receiving it back again : but, nevertheless, the *mind* is not without its hope of gratification : it is true, he looks not for the good services of his beneficiary, but his good wishes, for the *acknowledgment*, and not for the *requital*, of the benefit conferred.

This is his due ! *less* than this, a grateful mind cannot pay, and the liberal mind looks not for *more*.

In some sort to strengthen these reflections, we will suppose the *parent*, prescient of his child's disobedience, could anticipate the sorrows of his latter years, could know that contempt should require affection, that insolence and cruelty would be the baneful fruit of indulgence and anxiety,

anxiety, and that in the evening of life
he should be doomed to feel,

“ How sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is
“ To have a thankless child.”

Shakespeare.

We will suppose it possible, the *friend*
could ascertain, that his unsolicited and
benevolent assistance would be the means
of nourishing a man, who should, when
most he needed his good report, be the
first to wound his character, and most
clamorous to injure his reputation.—
These returns are far from being impossi-
ble, far from being uncommon. Happy
is it for us, that we are not called to
so severe a trial, and we may exclaim
with the poet :

“ Oh ! blindness to the future, kindly giv’n,
“ That each may fill the circle mark’d by
heav’n.”

With

With these aggravations before their eyes, I should be led to distrust the most immaculate friendship and affection upon earth.

But surely, whilst the gratifications of these virtues are confined within such blameless bounds, we may rest satisfied with their excellence, and wait the arrival of that eternal morning, when affection and benevolence shall be our employment and bliss in an invariable state of perfection.

Indeed, we should have little cause to complain, if the friendship of this world had but the *innocent mind* to gratify, and could be brought to divest itself of that convenient seeming, which tends to practise on mens lives: if we would be honest enough to examine minutely, in every act of kindness which we confer, the *real motive* of the heart: and to try,

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whether

whether it is to indulge the *pride* or the *sympathy* of our nature : whether we mean, directly or indirectly, to serve our *neighbour* or *ourselves* the most.

Were this the case, we should indeed be more solicitous to reform the heart than to compliment it ; and, instead of *describing* friendship fairer than she is, absolutely *make* her so.

We cannot but observe, as we go along, the very strong obligation of duty and respect towards our parents in particular, and of gratitude for benefits received towards our friends in general. One brief observation, however, may be suitable here. It manifestly is not the part of a person receiving kindness to censure the motive, and meanly endeavour to lessen the obligation, by laying it to the score of duty or necessity in the benefactor : it is sufficient for him, that
his

his wants are removed, his distresses alleviated, or his wishes gratified; and his gratitude is *equally* called for, let the occasion of the benefit so conferred have been what it may.

Our relation to the world is such, that we are born to confer, as well as receive, kindnesses. It is not enough, that we are ourselves exempt from indigence or distress; from ignorance or misfortune; thousands are overwhelmed with the one or the other, and haply not a few within the circle of our intercourse with the world: it necessarily therefore becomes our duty, as we have ability or opportunity, to relieve, or commiserate at least, the several calamities, which fall under our notice.

If superiority gives us a temporary advantage over others, in point of power or circumstances, it cannot be intended

to enable us to abuse the one by an usurped tyranny, or petulant authority: or to misapply the other by a churlish and avaricious refusal to extend its benefits to others. If a series of prosperity casts a shield around us, against the assaults of distress, and has placed us in so retired a paradise, as that the plaintive appeal of misery cannot penetrate, and where we are unacquainted with the weight of affliction, which presses hard upon the multitude; does it become us, when a tale of domestic woe is unfolded, to avoid it as troublesome or inconvenient?

A friend or acquaintance, perhaps, is divested of his expectations by a chastening stroke of Providence, and retires in sorrow from the tranquility of better days to the sad dwelling of distress. Sickness bows down another, and with relentless rage distracts, or with more
cala-

calamitous success consumes, the wasting remnant of his days. A third is swept away, the comfort and pleasure of all that knew him, the blessing and support of a numerous family, who, with unutterable anguish, are lamenting his departure. Here are opportunities of administering comfort, and sympathising with the keenest sorrows of mortality: and surely, if any thing can antedate the pleasures of futurity, it is the discharge of duties such as these, pouring wine and oil into the mental wounds of a disconsolate friend.

These may be the *leading features* of this world's *calamity*, but there are besides, a long train of evils subordinate to these, "which flesh is heir to," a thousand piteous situations, which time and circumstance only can reveal, and which supplicate our assistance, in the
great

great road of life. It is not in our power to commit, either to memory or to paper, the variety of difficulties, which mankind have to encounter: as they present themselves, whether of a greater or less degree, our assistance is required, more especially amongst the small circle of our intercourse in the world.

We may be secretly acquainted, either from our own observation, or from the accidental intimation of others, that a friend or a stranger would receive a material benefit by some slight act, or some trifling condescension on our part: possibly without a crime, we might pass by, regardless of such concern, and think it, either too insignificant in itself, or a waste of time, which was not required at our hands: but herein does the benevolent mind delight; these are employments, which he most religiously engages in,

in, rejoicing as much at the *opportunity* as the *power* of doing good:*

Have we the advantage of superiour talents, or a superiour education to others, we are not to confine them to the researches

* Perhaps I cannot adduce a more striking elucidation of this virtue, than the following instance.

An illustrious prelate, on his journey to his diocese, overtook a man meanly habited, and with every appearance of distress, walking on the road; his dress, wretched as it was, seemed however to bespeak him a *clergyman*. Moved with so *intimate* an appeal to his compassion, he bade the stranger draw nigh, and upon enquiry, found that he was an American minister, who, on account of the war, had been obliged to quit a comfortable living there, and seek shelter in this country, without preferment or friends. The bishop offered him a seat in his carriage, and on the way investigated more minutely the several forrows of his situation, and upon his arrival at C—— presented him with a competent provision in his patronage.

searches of the closet, nor leave our attainments behind us when we quit it. I mean the influence and effect of them, for there is no character less agreeable than the conceited pedant, who in all companies, and on all occasions, deals out his knowledge in mechanical phrases, and in an uncivilized sense of superiority. The information which we derive from *departed genius*, should be as conspicuous an ornament of the *heart* as of the *head*: and we should endeavour to discover our attainments by the refined and exemplary exercises of superiour temperance, patience, instruction and advice. We must necessarily become better acquainted with the nature and operation of the human heart, the swift succession and violent effects of passion, hatred, implacability, and revenge; and, by due attention to these, become better prepared to encounter the first impulses of such dreadful attacks, and better disposed to pacify
and

and subdue them in others. Thus, for instance, a supposed insult or affront, more especially from the *less informed* of mankind, will cease to aggravate; and we shall naturally be disposed to avoid the sense of it in a variety of allowances: it may be, it was not intended, or if it was the provocation on *our* part, was violent and unjustifiable, acknowledgement is ready to be made, and forgiveness sought: these are extenuations of the most flagrant insult, which a well cultivated mind must be ready to embrace. But, on the other hand, the affront *is* arrayed in all its *aggravation*: still education is not disarmed, it now calls in all its store of comfort and enjoyment, and manifestly discovers a decided advantage, looking down with compassion upon the bitter effects of contracted feelings, and an illiterate mind, and blazing forth, in all the splendor of forbearance and forgiveness.

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Amongst

Amongst the variety of opportunities, in which a man of learning may amiably discover his understanding, this of pardoning the errors of human nature, is not the least brilliant: this distinguishes the *substance* from the *shadow* of education, and demonstrates its *utility* as well as its *ornament*. The natural appendage to this character will be (for without it cannot be compleat) that he will be as cautious of *giving* as he is of *taking* offence, but this will come particularly under a future chapter. Besides, the illiterate and weak in understanding lay a most powerful claim to the advice and admonitions of those, who excel them in intellectual talents, or their cultivation. The evils and difficulties of life are too many and distressing for the *wisest* of men to encounter with sufficient calmness and circumspection; numberless then, must be the impositions and inconveniences which afflict the ignorant and unwary

wary. In a life of business such circumstances challenge our daily attention, and if we feel at all, we must feel it an indispensable part of our duty to enter into their situations, and as far as our knowledge will carry us, counsel them for their safety and prosperity.

With respect to particular attachments, those which are earliest formed seem to acquire a greater degree of strength and constancy than any other. Much care is doubtless necessary to form them, as much importance will attend the choice. *That* friendship is certainly not worth our establishing, which may not be implicitly trusted with our most retired concerns, without hesitation and reluctance. Upon such confidence rest its utility and enjoyments: without it, all is visionary and superficial.

One great point of happiness is gained when the friendship is first established : the *continuance* of that happiness most frequently depends upon *our own* disposition and temper, and it requires a more than ordinary share of prudence to preserve it. Nothing short of the most alarming danger, or most insufferable series of ill treatment, should tempt us to dissolve the attachment ; much less should we be ready to violate it, upon every trivial occasion, through difference of sentiment, heat of temper, or any of the real or imaginary infirmities of human nature, considering well our own hearts, equally prone to passion and contradiction.

There is, however, one particular point of duty, incumbent upon us in this profession of friendship, the too frequent and glaring violation of which has drawn upon it the most just disgrace ;
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it is our constancy and uniformity in time of need.

With too much justice indeed has it been urged against the friendship of mankind, that it exists only in the sunshine of prosperity, and dies or decays in the season of adversity. Though this assertion, with respect to general observation, is not to be controverted, yet there are some few at least, whose consistent kindness droops not at the necessity of an once exalted friend, how humiliating soever his circumstances, or sorrowful his situation.

It is *dishonour* and not *distress*; it is *guilt* and not *misfortune*, which alone can justify coolness or neglect.

Friendship, when established, becomes a reciprocal league or covenant. What can we call that principle then, or, rather

ther the man whom it governs, who seeks to serve you most, when you can have little or no occasion to try the sincerity of his attachment: and when your misfortune brings it to the test, conscious of his duplicity and shame, shrinks from your observation, as having nothing to pay. He acknowledges the just demand of his creditor, and has to curse the prodigality of his professions, which has betrayed the bankruptcy of his heart.

If this is friendship, it is but a name indeed!

Another charge, which presses equally hard upon it, is, the effect of *our own success*; and this it must be confessed, is *a very dangerous trial*.

Dazzled by the sudden splendour, and growing giddy with the rapidity of ascent, it requires much time to compose our judgment, and to realize our true situation.

situation. Those whom we once esteemed and courted, may not on this account be in absolute want, either of our assistance, or our regard: and yet the eye of vanity indulges itself in *magnifying* the distance to which we are removed from them, and we affect to *lament*, while we are silently *enjoying*, the *separation*.

This friendship is but a shadow !

TRUE friendship places the parties, intellectually speaking, upon a level, which neither the misfortune that apparently sinks the one, nor the success which seems to exalt the other, is capable of destroying. The mind, untainted by outward circumstance, remains the same, and glows with an *uniform* and *unabating* affection.

Let us resolve from these observations, never to forsake a friend, because *his* possessions are *reduced*, or *ours multiplied* ;
for,

for, the former is prompted by dissimulation and hypocrisy, and the latter by supercilious haughtiness : characters the most *despicable* of all, which infest the *moral* world.

I cannot forbear allotting a page or two for the purpose of investigating some very fashionable prejudices, which are abroad, respecting our friendship with the female world ; opinions, which may be of infinite service to a life of gallantry and licentiousness, but which, morally considered, are highly injurious to the fair sex, and disgraceful to ourselves.

They contend, that the friendship we bear the female world, is *inseparable* from love. Now, that they are altogether *distinct* in operation, pursuit and quality, may be seen by briefly comparing them. Friendship operates with *calm reason*, *deliberate judgment*, and *nice circumspection* ;

Love

Love is *thoughtless, unadvised, and sudden*. The former seeks the gratification of *others*; the latter the gratification of *itself*. What is considered the *ornament* of the one, most certainly is a *blemish* in the other: Love must be confined to its single object, and derives its lustre proportionably from its constancy and attachment to it; whereas friendship disdains boundary, and to contract it, is to violate it. What character so invaluable as an *universal* friend? What more to be avoided than an *universal* lover? No affections can be more distinct.

The friendship we bear the *female* world, will naturally assume a tenderness unknown amongst ourselves. We feel ourselves irresistibly engaged in a more important trust, and called upon to discharge it with more than ordinary warmth: but this is not love, it is a principle worthy our nature, and highly becoming

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our station, as protectors of the *weaker* sex. That they are born to love is an exquisite ingredient in our felicity. That they are born with *constancy* to love, is the summit of human happiness; and that they are born worthy all the affection our nature is capable of must as readily be admitted. But this debt discharged, have they no *inferiour* blessings in store? Are the springs of reciprocal regard to be frozen up, and our correspondence confined within the scanty pale of *acquaintance*? Are they to be rendered incapable of receiving and returning the social enjoyments of life, without *violating* their delicacy? Forbid it reason! forbid it generosity! Such however is the imputation, if we would reduce them so cheap as to take their esteem as *earnest* of their love.

I fear this idea has long been the hidden cause of much mischief and disquiet,

quiet, for many a lady has unfortunately mistaken *civility* for *love*; and on the other hand, the natural urbanity and freedom of the female mind, has hurried many a man into the persuasion of his own personal or mental accomplishments, insomuch that he has taken for granted, every mark or appearance of *temporal* partiality was the unerring token of love. Now, though I must pity, from the bottom of my heart, the credulity of those females, who have too frequently felt the fatal effects of such delusion; yet, how just an object of our contempt is the man, who can insidiously make conquest of a female heart, for the mere pitiful ambition of boasting the triumph, and thereby adding *insult* to *captivity*: or, vainly imagine every woman must be in love with him, who is free enough to discover the vivacity and friendship of her soul.

But the injustice and uneasiness end not here: What distractions, what jealousies

must such opinions create in *married* life? What woman would be safe from *suspicion*, if every act of kindness, every expression of friendship, instead of establishing her worth, were to be considered so many corresponding *proofs* of her infidelity of heart?

From the above remarks I doubt not that you will regard with contempt such loose opinions, and are convinced that it is possible to be the *friend* of a female, without being her *lover*: and that a well informed woman is capable of innocently sharing the confidence of the virtuous man, though not the intimate conversation of the libertine.

CHAP.



C H A P. III.

C O N D U C T

A N D

C O N V E R S A T I O N.

Homines amplius oculis, quam auribus credunt: longum iter est per præcepta, breve et efficax per exempla. Seneca.

THE most difficult task which we have to learn in the school of life, is to *act well*. Our knowledge, how enlightened soever, or however exalted our station, is of no intrinsic value, without a correspondent conduct. Mankind will, and indeed can only judge by our actions; to these they indiscriminately adhere, to
pro-

pronounce our character. Fine sentiments, fine writings, brilliancy of elocution, extensive learning, and extensive property, have sometimes met together in the most notorious villain; and greatly assisted the baseness of his designs, by suspending for a while, the conviction, and even the suspicion, of the observer.

These then, as Hamlet says, “are but
“actions which a man may play:” they
are most ornamental indeed, and greatly
conducive to our consequence, so long
as our intentions are upright, and our
dealings within the pale of integrity. But,
when they tempt us to take advantage
of the admiration and credulity of man-
kind, by committing acts of meanness
and vice with greater license and security
than others, what have we gained, but
the aggravated censures and curses of the
world, whilst we are irrecoverably de-
prived of the tranquility and peace, which
an

an inferiour situation of life might have insured to us?

The first and most important thing, therefore, to establish, is a most inviolable attachment to integrity and truth; so that our conversation and conduct be alike free from duplicity. This corner stone once laid will secure the edifice from falling.*

If

* There is a passage or two in the letters of a late noble earl to his son, which cannot but atone for some of the very many stains which disgrace them in point of morality.

“ It is not possible for a man to be virtuous,
“ without strict veracity; for a lie is a vice of
“ the mind and of the heart. For God’s sake be
“ scrupulously jealous of the purity of your moral
“ character; keep it immaculate, unblemished,
“ unsullied, and it will be unsuspected. Defa-
“ mation and calumny never attack where there
“ is no weak place, they magnify but they do
“ not create.”

“ If I lie or equivocate (for it is the same
“ thing) in order to excuse myself for something
“ that

If I say, that bare honesty of conduct does not constitute the man of integrity, I mean to be understood, that it does not constitute the man of *honour*: for between *honesty* and *dishonesty* there is a wide space occupied by MEANNESS, which is so curiously blended with their respective boundaries as to partake of the nature of *both*, claiming affinity to the one without being able to avoid the disgrace of the other.

A man of *true* honour will not trust himself too near so dangerous a neighbour, but keep the broad highway of honesty, without once being so *circumspectly just* as to lose sight of *generosity*.

In

“ that I have said or done, and to avoid the
“ danger and the shame, I shew myself to be the
“ lowest and the meanest of mankind, and am
“ sure to be always treated as such. Equivo-
“ cating, evading, shuffling, in order to remove
“ a present danger or inconvenience, is some-
“ thing so mean, and betrays so much fear, that
“ whoever practices them always deserves to be,
“ and often will be kicked.”

In a life of business the above maxim must have its due weight, and will secure you from that common usage of taking the advantage of any man's *ignorance* or *necessity*.

To be *industrious* is a duty no less incumbent upon the man of business than to be generous and just. I do not mean that bodily labour and fatigue are essentials; but a certain *activity of mind*, to a share of which every occupation in life lays its claim. There is nothing so dangerous or disgraceful in any station as an habit of sloth and indolence: it steals insensibly upon the man, 'till it has taken possession of every faculty, both of soul and body. To a wretch thus *afflicted*, for I think it a *calamity*, time passes by with leaden wings; whilst he, as it were, watching the particles of sand in an hour glass sits brooding in useless contemplation, fattening perhaps upon the *luxuries*, without enjoying the *comforts* of life.

To make life *agreeable*, it must be made *useful*, therefore industry, properly proportioned, must be pleasure.

If any one situation requires good temper, more than another, it must be the life of business.—A man thus engaged has every temper in its turn to grapple with; for he is particularly exposed to the arrogance and contumely of his *superiours*, the imposition and overreaching of his *equals*, and to the envy and slander of his *inferiors*: all which a wise man will be as wary of incurring, as he will be patient under, if incurred. A tradesman of what rank soever, be his education ever so extensive, his property ever so substantial, his connections ever so respectable, is notwithstanding *but* a *tradesman*; and if he is unfortunate enough to be vulnerable by it, will frequently feel the mortification of submitting to the *scorn* of the *unworthy*, who
perhaps

perhaps, but for the bubble of *precedence*, would in every point of view considered become, beyond comparifon, *inferiour* to him.

But fuch are the terms of his ftation, he enters upon it with thefe impediments in his way, and, if he has but the prudence to conceal his indignation, will doubtlefs laugh in his turn.

Civility and patience, under any of thefe circumftances, are the two grand objects of our attention: the one is a feldom failing antidote againft the bitternefs of pride, whilft the other is a retreat if that fails in its operation. We will note this by the way; there is no honeft occupation in life, which can clothe any man with difgrace, whofe conduct cafts no difhonour upon his occupation. The mind therefore will have its dignity and comfort, whether the body is fufained

by the bread of carefulness, or pampered with the luxuries of wealth.

I have now touched upon the peculiar points to which men of business should give their strictest study. Integrity, generosity, industry, civility, and good temper are, I think, very able companions and supporters to carry them safely, honourably, and happily, through the sphere of life into which they are cast. Thus much for business.

Company, next to this, affords another trial for our caution and perseverance; and as public company will naturally lead to indulgencies, it is certainly necessary to preserve a command over them. I need not say, that excess in any thing is dangerous, but especially here; for ebriety is the parent of mischief, since it robs us imperceptibly of our power and inclination. A very little prudence, at
first

first setting out, will effectually provide for our security in this respect; as it is the distinguished honour of the present day, that it has abolished the authority of fettering the inclination, and plunging with a brutal enjoyment, the unwilling guest into drunkenness. But, amidst convivial humour and merriment, there is still left a disgraceful privilege, to which, however reluctantly, we are sometimes constrained to submit; I mean that vile flow of obscenity, which under cover of *double entendre*, or, what is worse *undisguised*, claims the place and applause of *wit*: to suffer it is painful, to encourage it is infamous. A man thus situated, if he is a man of sense and decency, may always find means to avoid, or at least tacitly condemn it: if, in strict compliance with good manners, he is forbid peevishly and morosely to censure it: yet, in compliance with his own feelings, he is not obliged to enjoy it with such avidity

avidity, as to indulge the fever of his imagination at the expence of his understanding; and to shout applause upon the disgraceful subject, which will next day excite his honest indignation.

The cheerfulness which society creates, as it contributes to the temporal felicity and recreation of the busied mind, so it ought never to be checked whilst it abounds with harmless *gayety*: but when society becomes the seminary of *idleness*, *lewdness*, or *prophaneness*, as such spirits too frequently infest it, happy is the man that has resolution obstinate enough to forsake it.

I cannot help observing here the very great danger to which, through inadvertency or zeal, we are exposed from the unbridled indulgence of our spirits. When warm with wine, the disposition of the heart is very frequently so compleatly changed,

changed as to throw it entirely off its guard. Arguments, or rather disputes, run high, a word or look, or sometimes *less* than either, has been the original source of the most fatal quarrels. Characters of friends, at the very time those friends would have been *ashamed* of their *champions*, have through difference of sentiment been so delicately considered, as to occasion bloodshed. Reluctance at drinking a toast has been sufficient to promote a duel, when perhaps the character given was either so publicly despicable, or notoriously criminal, as to justify such reluctance. But when we consider that the *heart* in this case is no more a party, than it is in the former instance; it is surely much more prudent to do away such scruples, and with the same sort of worship, as in a Catholic country we should meet the *host*, or any other national ceremony, avoid it, if we could; if not, comply with the custom, though

though we abjured the idolatry. It is a matter of great moment to avoid such company if we can; but, if accident throws us in their way, a double degree of diligence is requisite for our lips, lest they unman the heart with wine, or disgrace it with folly. Politics, in general, is the hackneyed subject, which lays violence on the conversation as soon as the appetite is sated: and there are two reasons why it does so: *one is*, because politics are for ever fluctuating and affording new matter for debate; *the other is*, because there are few men but wish to be accounted judges of them. This subject will for ever be drawing us into inveterate contests, as destructive to the harmony of the table as it is frequently to our own secret satisfaction.

Few have ability, or acquaintance enough with the subject, to convince; and fewer have humility and patience enough to be convinced.

We

We meet with others, whose talent, or rather inclination, lies in *narrative*, with the *innocent* freedoms of embellishing or adding as it suits them. This is such a contemptible sort of lying, that, though it may be harmless, must rouse the disapprobation of every one, who is insulted with their conversation:

There are still more, who can scarcely deliver a sentence unless *adorned* with an oath: the guilt of it is obvious; and the indecency of the habit so very degrading to the accepted character of a gentleman; that it must lead us very much to suspect both their *accomplishments* and their *principles*; on both which accounts, we should avoid their society.

There is yet another order of mankind, whose highest ambition is to be esteemed in company for the superiour excellence (though not *professional*) of

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singing

singing the best song, or relating a story with the best grace and ornament. Having laid out all their stock of industry to this end, they may obtain such applause as suits their merit, but are usually esteemed for nothing else; courted indeed, where mirth and song abound, but not so much as thought of in the society where these resources are unnecessary. Strange! that any man should be guided by so pitiful an ambition, and be wilfully blind to the degrading observation, that the preference paid him is but *local* and *temporal*, and expires with the sound.

It is scarcely possible to join a mixed company, without remarking some such characters as I have mentioned. One example of which must do more effectual execution, in a thinking mind, than it is in the power of description to do. The inference is plain; such observation will create disgust, and if we have a de-
fire

fire to be universally respected, instead of partially admired, we shall hold up such examples as highly improper for our imitation.

I would not be understood herein to condemn that laudable desire of affording what share of entertainment is within the compass of our abilities, to those about us: but it is the poor pre-eminence of being accounted *fine fellows* in company, which is so prevailing a *passion* amongst many, whose families and connections in the mean time are suffering materially, by their absence or neglect, which I consider inexcusable.

Public company, and sometimes private conversation, will pester you with insufferable details of gallantry and licentiousness. If this is unpardonable in a young man, what must we consider it in an old one? I have frequently been

witness of both. The subject once on foot, you shall perceive it communicate like an infection, till the exaggerated feats of the candidates for disgrace shall make their audience doubt, whether it is possible for men to be such villains as they paint themselves. A strange infatuation this! One would think, that having plunged one family into anguish, seduced the ornament of another into wretchedness and want, and entailed upon themselves the excruciating evidences of repeated debauchery, were circumstances, that in the cooler season of reflection would command *silence* at least, if they could not occasion *sorrow*. The man who can commit such deeds, and glory in having committed them, is such a character, as I sincerely hope, will never pollute the conversation, in which you shall have a share; if he should, your duty is to shun him as you would an assassin.

However,

However, I am led charitably to believe, that many affect the conquests they have never made, and with a supercilious air of personal vanity, *hint* at situations and connections, which they never had the address to obtain, nor abilities to make use of, if obtained. They would fain persuade you of the extravagant beauty and extensive accomplishments of their *captive*, whilst they are betraying by their very assertion, the *want* of *both*. This is surely the most unpardonable of all vanity, and they will find their labour as much lost, to make men of understanding *believe* them, as it would have been in the *attempt* to effect the *truth* of their report. Be it as it may, the conclusion must be, our charity is called upon to impute to *falsehood*, what we otherwise must to *villainy*.

There is a caution which will not be unseasonable here, which is, that what
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we accidentally hear in one company we never should repeat in another, since attention is not always paid to the discovery of the *author* ; it is frequently sufficient that a man *repeats* it, to be called to account for the calumny. And the reason is self evident, for though such a one but repeats what he has first heard, he repeats it where it was never before heard, and in that case, though innocent of the forgery, may tarnish the innocence of a character where till then it was spotless, and may not be able with all his industry and persuasion to repair the injury, which the inadvertency of a moment has occasioned.

Besides, consider that it is of the greatest moment to your own peace and character to avoid joining, or at least indulging yourself, in the fashionable vice of the day, defamation.

It

It is not a novel, but it is an interesting observation, that the reputation of mankind, as it is the most defenceless and vulnerable, so is it the most sensible and tender part. Dark hints, and unsupported inuendoes, the multiplying offspring of superficial enquiry and malicious credulity, are like the wounds of the cowardly assassin, who dips his poinard in poison; no medicine, however efficacious in itself, can follow its malignity in every part. The heart, accustomed to such practices, cannot be very tender either of its own virtues or comforts. It is no evidence of a man's *understanding*, that he is capable of *discovering* the errors of another; or of his *humanity*, that he is capable of *exposing* them.

The venom which is industriously extracted from the *mysterious insinuation*, the *strutting* of the *shoulder*, the *affected silence* at the bare mention of a name, circum-

circumstances which most powerfully combine to involve the unfortunate character, who shall call them into exercise, is perhaps more noxious and inveterate than the calumnious assertion, or direct unblushing falshood.

The enjoyment seems not to be sufficiently gratifying in fulying the reputation of a stranger; the highest luxury, to the shame of our age be it recorded, is derived from wounding the characters of the very friends, whom we profess to value and respect.

Those who engage in this sort of conversation will frequently premise to you, that it is very distant from calumny, and that they are the greatest enemies to defamation; they will not allow the least ill nature in the remark, but alledge by way of introduction, “ that the circumstances
“ were so *very remarkable*, or that there
“ appeared

“ appeared in them such a *similarity* with
“ the subject, they could not avoid re-
“ peating them, though they *do not believe*
“ one syllable of the report.” In many
cases, though the most innocent motive
may occasion it, and though we are per-
fectly devoid of unkindness, yet when
we reflect, that through our want of
consideration and caution, the reputation
of a friend or a stranger, may be injured ;
and whilst we indulge what we think
inoffensive conversation, we are plunging
daggers into the peace of one, who may
have rendered us benefits, or at least,
who never wronged us : it is surely suffi-
cient to arm us with peculiar circum-
spection, whenever idle reports of cha-
racters are introduced to force or enliven
the conversation.

We are sometimes so hurt and nettled
at what we imagine to be false, when
asserted in company, that we are upon
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the very brink of flat contradiction. This cannot be too carefully avoided, for, besides betraying an unquestionable token of ill breeding, it will expose us to endless quarrels and uneasiness. If we must needs notice the error, let us do it with all the politeness we are masters of, with these two special observations; — to avoid giving offence by the *mode* of contradiction; — and — to be fully satisfied of the *authenticity* of our opinion.

He who is given to frequent dispute, and ever ready to give the lie, however politely, to any subject which may fall in his way, is sure to be considered, and not without reason, as a man delighted with his own conversation, and eager to be accounted possessed of extensive knowledge. It is much safer and much pleasanter to suffer the mistake to pass, if no great injury is sustained, rather than to be at the trouble of exposing the
ignorance

ignorance, or at the hazard of provoking the *anger*, of every one, who may be so situated.

On the other hand, let us avoid that one most abominable and unpardonable error, with which too many of us stand justly chargeable, that *obstinacy of opinion*, which will not yield to the most persuasive arguments, scarcely to the most demonstrative evidence. To bear up stubbornly against conviction is a conduct which must necessarily excite disgust. Whatever opinion you may entertain respecting any thing, recollect that you *may be* mistaken, and that if it is *possible*, it is probable that the opinion of others may be better founded, at least that evidence will outweigh idea. Mr. LOCKE observes, “ that in many cases, one with amazement hears the arguings, and is astonished at the obstinacy of a worthy man, who yields not to the evidence

“ of reason, though laid before him as
 “ clear as day light.”

Much talking, I believe, is frequently a surer evidence, of a shallow understanding, than much laughter.* The *latter* in many cases, and in the wisest men, is an irresistible applause, to the fallies of unexpected wit; and therefore equally chargeable upon wisdom as folly; whereas the former is seldom found prevailing with wisdom, whose attention is always paid to the quality, and not the quantity of words she utters; consequently much *talking* is the sole characteristic of the superficial prattler, who is too communicative to keep his knowledge to himself. If we would gain respect as well as improvement, it is to be acquired more by attention to others, than by speaking ourselves; that is, a
 lively

* “ A fool and his words are soon parted,” for
 so *should* the proverb run. *Shenstone.*

lively attention, which is followed by reflection, and not that musing silence which never thinks. A man will frequently gain as much credit, in point of understanding, by the *proper mode* of his attention to what is said, as he would for the most pertinent and brilliant remarks upon the subject.

Besides, there is scarcely any thing so truly mortifying to, or that will so rapidly excite anger in, the person speaking, as a *visible indifference* or *apparent absence* on the part of the person addressed. This is a successful species of contempt, which through *inattention*, more than *design*, has created many enemies.

But, above all things, avoid that *reserve*, which will never fail to expose you to the suspicion of every company to which you resort, you will assuredly
be

be regarded as insufferably ill tempered, or what is worse, artful and designing. Besides, it sometimes looks so very like affectation, that we must at any rate avoid it. A modest diffidence will always be distinguished from obstinate reserve: for it will be silent without being fullen; at the same time chearful without being clamorous; and, by degrees, will acquire that ease and vivacity which discovers, at least, a desire to partake of, if not contribute to, the enjoyment of society. Such will never want the fostering hand of kindness to encourage and assist its progress. But *reserve* so far from having a disposition to enjoy conversation, affects an unmeaning pity for those who do, and visibly feels a perpetual mortification, when constrained to be a witness of chearfulness and society.

Be sure to avoid that barbarous custom of sneering at, and exposing to ridicule,
any

any of the calamities, or infirmities, which fall to the lot of mankind; such as the *monuments of misfortune*, or the *shattered ruins of age*. I have seen many a man of education guilty of this: a *brave* man will not be —— a *good* man cannot —— There is a hidden degree of cowardice always an ingredient in this, for the property of cowardice is to be insolent and cruel; and it is taking a most pitiful advantage of an helpless situation to insult with impunity. None therefore but the most dastardly spirits can enjoy it.

With respect to *conversation* itself, we must be upon our guard against a very dangerous custom, which may be occasioned by a laudable desire of improvement, but is too frequently I believe to be resolved into vanity and affectation: which is, the use of words, with the meaning of which we are not well acquainted.

quainted. This, of all other mistakes, is the surest to destroy what good opinion soever might have before been entertained of our genius and education. It betrays us into a twofold error, by frequently occurring in a sentence requiring the very opposite expression; and by the violence done to the orthography, or at least the accent.

A man cannot err, if he closely attends to those expressions only, with which he is well acquainted; and will frequently have credit for more knowledge than he is actually in possession of: whilst, on the other hand, one single word *miscalled* or *misapplied* will as often call his *real* understanding in question.

Respecting *dress*, though fashion is for ever changing, it is not for us to change with it: there are but two grand points,
to

to which the most worthy of every station steadily adhere, which are, propriety and uniformity. If we have an inclination to dress *suitable* to our situation, we cannot mistake it: if to dress *beyond* it, we shall not know at what point or degree to stop: the gentleman makes neatness his *first* object, and finery his *last*; to judge of the coxcomb, *reverse* it.

Besides the inequality of appearance, we are risking both our character and our property; for fashion seldom makes a proselyte; but she keeps him. When fortune fails him, he has recourse to credit, till having betrayed both, he is shunned by the gay characters he has courted, and blasted by the honest ones he has ruined.

Fashion, like a meteor, will divert the traveller from his path, till he finds him-

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self

self bewildered and betrayed into unknown tracts, and on a sudden loses both himself and guide.

To be prudent is not to be penurious, for the most expensive man may keep his accounts clear. The great danger of indulging a taste for dress, is the temptation of incurring expences, which are not, nor are likely to be, in our power to support, and in that case, we shall find but few, who are disposed to pity the reduced *prodigal*, however they might commiserate the misfortune of the *prudent*.

But, by attending too circumspectly to this rule, we must be careful not to run into the other extreme ; for though it is highly censurable to dress *beyond* our station, it is absolutely necessary to dress *equal* to it, since the greater part of mankind are too much addicted to judge
by

by appearance, and therefore we must ourselves be careful not to be the first to impair our consequence by the neglect of it.

Although the decoration of the person, in superfluity and extravagance, may in a great measure be attributed to the natural vanity of the mind, yet I cannot altogether acquit the *female* world of a very considerable share in promoting it. Were women as prodigal of their notice and approbation to the ornaments of the *mind*, as they are to the *foppery* of the *person*, the industry of young men would quickly take another turn; and as we must be covetous of their regard, if no other motive would operate, this would compel us to be attentive to our principles and manners: nor would *they* lose their reward, for by reforming our lives, they would provide for their own security,

and by destroying *seduction* on one side, prevent *wretchedness* on the other.

But the complexion of the present day is widely different, both respecting dress and manners; for with the first in particular, through all the catalogue of precedence, from the 'drawing room to the dairy, you will find one *universal passion*, one unaccountable and unconquerable attachment, to *scarlet* and the *cockade*, pervade the generality of the sex. And, what adds to the reflection, is this incontrovertible truth, that depravity of manners and licentiousness of conversation, do not lessen their regard for this preference; whilst men of real accomplishment, of education, of principle, unadorned with or unaffecting *military distinctions*, are considered as *subordinate beings* in THEIR order of creation. Now, what has been the consequence? why, under colour of any or no pretence, to assume the *uniform*
and

and *cockade*, throughout all orders of young men in general, but of the *metropolis* in particular, has been so prevalent a custom, that soldiers who really bore commissions, with a becoming distinction, *quitted* their regimental habit, and were no longer *proud* of the cockade, prostituted to such *general abuse*.

With respect to women, I mean the unfortunate, by some termed the unworthy of the sex, you cannot be too much upon your guard, but at the same time, you have the prudence to avoid and resolution to resist them, take not up, without distinction, that *illiberal* idea, that because they have been guilty of *one* offence, they are capable of *all*.

Happy would it have been for many of them, had they beheld man in so odious a light! That *man* will stop at no crime to effect the purpose of seduction,

or

or to abandon when seduced, their pitiable situation bears sufficient testimony. But this reflection is not just when applied to *them*: thousands, with unutterable anguish, brood over their ill-obtained and scanty meal, and in vain look back to their once honourable roof,

“ Not such the parent’s board, at which they fed,

“ Not such the precepts from their lips they drew.” *Shenstone.*

These must indeed excite our compassion, they have, *here at least, repentance* without *forgiveness*, the disposition but not the power to amend. — Guilt and subsistence are inseparable, with the dismal alternative of *food* and *sorrow*, or *virtue* and *famine*. What will not human nature undergo, when famine stares it in the face? It is not for us to judge, it is not for the virtuous of *their* sex to judge. Ease cannot answer the arguments,

ments of want, neither can we prescribe rules for what we cannot feel. Crimes almost lose their name when we close all the avenues to returning virtue. Such a situation is too severe for human nature; till therefore we can literally take the sting from death, and divest eternity of horror, they must shrink back, and at any rate exist. God only knows, and God only can tell, what share of his inexhaustible mercy he has in reversion, for these *peculiarly wretched* of human kind; be it ours at least, and if it is an error, we err on the safest side, to be prudent enough to avoid their crimes, and charitable enough to forgive them.

We will for a moment take a glance at her change of situation: it is but a short season since flattery almost warmed into idolatry, since adulation bent the pliant knee of hypocrisy, and the poison of pretended love, with irresistible sweetness, charmed the listening fair one.

How

How changed the scene !

Disowned by the very friends of whom before she was the *pride* ; *scorned* by the very sex, who could but *envy* before ; obliged to *court* the notice she could before *command*, and make a *science* of *allurement*, when every *native* grace is *fled*. Thus she passes through a progression of misery, till time shall have sufficiently preyed upon her novelty and beauty, then both sink at once, and

“ Like the baseless fabrick of a vision,
“ Leave not a wreck behind !”

Let us follow her when deserted by her seducer : — she seeks her parent, the parent, blush nature at the reproach ! knows not his child, and shuts his door against repentance and supplication. Gratitude is the last virtue which forsakes
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the female breast, and there are few instances in which acceptance and forgiveness would be abused. Such an act would *exalt* the parent, and *might preserve* the child!

The next difficulty with which she has to grapple, is the persecution of *her own* sex, who are frequently the only obstacles to her obtaining employment, those of them more especially, who having been blest with *less* beauty, or having experienced *less* temptation,

“Never err’d, because they ne’er were try’d.”

In what measure these may be chargeable with the *future* sorrows of her existence, it is not with me to determine. It is not a torrent of tears, nor the sincerest disposition to repentance, which will stop the violence of defamation; that will follow her like her shadow; and scandal,

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with

with a malicious pleasure, and ever wakeful anxiety, sit fanning the embers of her shame, and rather than they should expire will add the fuel of falsehood to increase the blaze.

Let then the virtuous of her sex forbear to condemn without mercy and without end; and treat with liberality and candour those unfortunate *monuments* of frailty, regarding them as unfortunate, without condemning them as irrecoverable; haply, thousands might embrace the opportunity denied them now, and recover their forfeited title to respect and admiration.

Debauchery, is a crime which stands *alone* amongst us, in which we arbitrarily assert a *privilege*, without a single argument to support it. The unbridled licentiousness of man originally modelled it into custom, and custom may have divested

divested it of *equal infamy* in *both* sexes, but it never can of *equal guilt*. That female chastity is a gem of the highest price, and cannot be sufficiently encouraged, must ever be acknowledged. But when any, by unforeseen misfortune deviates “from the thorny way to heaven,” shall we take upon us so unmanly a part, as to insult the weakest side?—shall we suffer the seducer to exult with impunity, and almost without censure, and wreck our contumely upon the female?—shall we think no language, no treatment, no disgrace, equal to the crime, on *her* part, who is *alone* the *sufferer*? In this case, surely, we should remember, we are exercising a liberty to which we have no pretensions;—we are ascending a tribunal, as void of *justice*, as it is of *mercy*;—and are passing a sentence, as applicable to the *judge*, as to the *criminal*. But it seems a paradox, when we consider the native tenderness of man, to these of his softer

nature, that because they are dependent, he should take advantage, at the very time the strongest claim is made to his generosity, to sink them beneath contempt for the commission of a crime, to which few of his own sex are *strangers*.

Thus much for the *unfortunate*. There are, however, doubtless, many, who from an early inclination to lewdness, and the most abandoned principles, counteracting the wholesome precepts and blameless examples of their instructors, have placed themselves in, and deluded others into, such a complicated scene of mischief, debauchery and infamy, as baffles the compassion of the most extensive benevolence. Some are of opinion, that the *obligation* of marriage, would have sufficient efficacy to prevent seduction; I confess my sentiments on this head are different, it would certainly be a very convenient method of putting parents and guardians at defiance,
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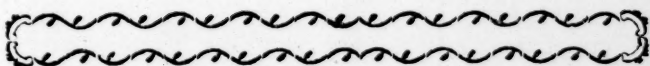
of repairing broken fortunes, or of reducing extensive ones. Let the obstacle be what it would between the parties, they would be in possession of a *certain scheme* to remove it; 'till, what with the inexperience of some, the immodesty of others, and the inclination of most, it would be necessary to become *infamous*, in order to become *independent*. I really wish the *contrary* was in force, that marriage could *not* take place after seduction; were this the case, no man in his senses, could attempt it, for the *promise of marriage* could not then avail; — this would be the touchstone of his honour, nor could he possibly escape this fiery ordeal of his esteem. It would render the tenderest moments of lovers safe, their most retired haunts secure; for if they really loved, and looked with a *permitted* rapture, to the *consummation* of their happiness; they would mutually and industriously avoid the indulgence of an unlawful passion,

as

as for ever depriving them of a *possibility* of its arrival. The virtuous maid would herein be safe, she could not mistake the villain for the man of honour, the man who only *desired*, for him who really *loved*; her reason would protect her, since he could offer no arguments to overthrow it; and if she *then fell*, she must fall with *guilt*. Bad as we are, much depends upon the conduct of the *female*, for there is frequently more eloquence in the *well timed* frown of a virtuous woman, to reprove improper wishes, or reform the libertine, than in all the dissertations upon religion and morality.

Thy *woes*, LAVINIA, press upon my remembrance here, and I will endeavour to do justice to thy memory.

LAVINIA.



L A V I N I A.

A F R A G M E N T.

----- ‘ Will not the torch of
‘ love burn bright, unless ’tis dipt in
‘ gall?’ rejoined ANNA: ‘ Degrade not
‘ the dignity of such a passion with cor-
‘ roding jealousy; that baneful compound
‘ of distrust, envy and resentment, each
‘ of which is sufficient to debase the
‘ mind, but uniting their several poisons
‘ must burn up every finer feeling of the
‘ soul, and, like a lamp in a sepulchre,
‘ imperfectly discover the shadows only
‘ of the virtues, which had once existence
‘ there.’ ——— ‘ Charming maid,’ said
ALBERT, ‘ I will offend no more, thou
‘ hence-

‘ henceforth shalt guide me ; but proceed
 ‘ with poor LAVINIA ; Oh ! ALBERT !
 ‘ may we never love as these have loved ! ”
 replied ANNA — ‘ Where could be the
 ‘ danger of their mutual attachment ? ’
 added ALBERT, gazing with unutterable
 fondness at her. ‘ There never was a
 more destructive proof,’ said ANNA, ‘ of
 ‘ the perfidy of man than in the pitiable
 ‘ sequel of LAVINIA’s sufferings. I told
 ‘ you yesterday what matchless tenderness
 ‘ was manifest at their interviews : —
 ‘ LAVINIA, at the usual hour of
 ‘ EDWARD’s visit, had retired to the
 ‘ garden, where she was soon joined by
 ‘ EDWARD. The preparation for their
 ‘ nuptials formed an interesting, if not
 ‘ the greater part of their conversation,
 ‘ and they already fancied themselves in
 ‘ their settled habitation. Every thing
 ‘ smiled around them, the autumnal
 ‘ evening beautifully departing with a
 ‘ glowing sky.’ “ We have already
 “ strayed

“ strayed too far,” said LAVINIA, “ they
“ will expect us within.” ‘ EDWARD,
‘ unwilling too soon to be fettered by
‘ joining the company, prevailed on her
‘ to indulge him longer with her charm-
‘ ing conversation.—She fatally con-
‘ sented; I say fatally, for how shall my
‘ heart sustain itself in the recital? — too
‘ secure was the retirement at which they
‘ had insensibly arrived — too soft were
‘ the moments that preceded desolation,
‘ — too flattering the calm unconscious
‘ of the approaching storm. By a com-
‘ bination of delusive indulgencies, she
‘ found herself bereft at once of inno-
‘ cence, of character, of peace; nor could
‘ the unhappy youth afford reparation to
‘ her soul. The day appointed for their
‘ nuptials drew nigh, and though this
‘ furnished her in a degree with consola-
‘ tion, yet could she not divest herself of
‘ a settled melancholy, which had alarmed
‘ her friends. The dreadful forebodings

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‘ of

‘ of the possibility of that day never arriving, almost drove her to despair; —
‘ at length the dismal tidings of EDWARD’S sudden and dangerous illness too much justified her prophetic fears.
‘ —EDWARD died; and LAVINIA found the evidence of her shame could not long be concealed. — EDWARD had, imprudently, revealed to his friend PHILINTHUS, the day before his death, the supposed situation of his beloved LAVINIA, and withal enjoined him, as he valued his memory, to lock the secret safely in his breast, and if cruel necessity should call for it, — to be her friend. PHILINTHUS, after his decease, renewed a passion he had secretly entertained for LAVINIA, with this humiliating difference, soliciting her to the unhallowed couch of adultery instead of his bridal bed. To this end he cruelly intimated to her his knowledge of their illicit amour. Stung to
‘ the

“ the quick at the base proposal she bade
“ him depart, and, with the most towering
“ superiority, upbraided him with treachery
“ to his departed friend, ’ “ Go,” said she,
“ unworthy of my EDWARD’s confidence,
“ go, barter with the servile wretch who
“ will reward thee with her licentious
“ converse and feast thy sensual hours
“ with unblushing wantonness.—Think
“ not, because I am unfortunate, that
“ I know not to distinguish between the
“ purity of EDWARD’s flame and the
“ wild fallies of a brutal lust. I was his
“ bride by every dearest tie, that only
“ union, by which the souls of lovers
“ can be joined, the bond of sacred and
“ inviolable truth ! Had he lived - - - -
“ - - - - - but, gracious
“ HEAVEN ! thy will has snatched him
“ from me, yet left me his affection,
“ which I will never violate ! you may
“ spare me, Sir, your upbraidings, I am
“ not the guilty wretch you take me for—

“Boast no more the participation of his
 “spotless friendship,—you are no friend
 “of EDWARD, who to gratify your
 “passion, would plunge into eternal
 “misery one whose happiness it was to
 “boast her EDWARD’S love, whose
 “only crime was an unguarded tender-
 “ness, but whose privilege it shall be
 “never to dishonour his memory!”—
 ‘PHILINTHUS, confounded at this un-
 ‘expected rebuke, endeavoured to stifle
 ‘his resentment, and retired. The bitter
 ‘effects were however too visible to mis-
 ‘take the cause. Her father being ap-
 ‘prised of her dishonour, with an im-
 ‘placable fiat, forbid her ever to see him
 ‘more; and with a temporary scanty
 ‘subsistence, launched this beauteous,
 ‘once beloved, of his happiest hours,
 ‘into the remorseless world, an help-
 ‘less victim to slander, oppression, and
 ‘famine.

‘ The

‘ The perjured wretch who caused this
‘ unnatural separation, with the most ag-
‘ gravating insult, tendered her assistance,
‘ upon conditions the most abject and
‘ humiliating, to her exalted and gene-
‘ rous mind, but without success: Thro’
‘ much severity of sorrow, and accumu-
‘ lated anguish, did the lovely LAVINIA
‘ linger, till the dreadful hour arrived,
‘ when the pledge of their unexampled
‘ affection was to be born. Heaven in
‘ that hour decreed her final suffering!—
‘ Unequal to the conflict nature owned
‘ the hand of OMNIPOTENCE, and
‘ obeyed!—She and her infant spirit, to-
‘ gether freed from the perfidy and op-
‘ pression of man, winged their flight to
‘ those happy regions which her penitence
‘ had fought.

‘ PHILINTHUS, overcome with the
‘ restless and agonizing reflections of the
‘ mischiefs which his lust occasioned, had
‘ recourse to a pistol; and thus by an
‘ act,

'act, the refuge only of the desperate,
'concluded a life, crimsoned over with
'crimes.

'Enough! Anna! exclaimed Albert,
'enough of sorrow, lovely maid! Our
'loves, I trust, shall share a happier fate,
'and if to-morrow's dawn is not de-
'structive to my hopes, our nuptials shall
'establish the purity of our attachment.

'And though we prove not so severe
'a destiny, yet will we think it no dis-
'honour to weep over their memory, and
'emulate the sincerity of their passion.'



I perceive I have dwelt too long upon
the subject: but as seduction, though a
fashionable crime, according to my feel-
ings, classes with the most execrable, I
could not forbear bestowing a little time
to point out its consequences.

We

We will now turn to the *fairer* side, those *spotless* characters, whose company and conversation we should by all means *value*. Believe me, that however some men will affect to despise the understanding of the *female* world, and consequently treat their conversation as trifling; nothing so much contributes to refine the ideas, and polish the manners, as a taste for the society of amiable women. It is to be remembered, that from the difference of their education, and the great extent of accomplishment, which is attainable in the present day, the age, as well as the country in which we live, can produce female characters equal to the deepest searches of *literature*. Thank Heaven! the time is past, when every female excellence consisted in good housewifry (which ought not however to be neglected;) and the daughter of a gentleman or tradesman, was not able to write a letter of three lines with grammatical propriety.

propriety. Those ages of ignorance are past, and we have abjured so barbarous a neglect. If, then female conversation is irksome, it is to be feared that it is only so to those, whose understanding cannot bear a rival in so unlooked for a place ; or who are desirous of none other gratification, in the company of *virtuous* women, than what is in the power of the most *abandoned* to bestow.

Can one, for instance, reflect without pain upon that abominable practice, though sanctified by custom, of hinting the ladies out of the room, when a glass or two of wine has gone round, as impediments to the mirth of the table ; and proclaiming, by this disgraceful preparation, the unrestrained sallies of ribaldry and riot, which are about to be indulged. I verily believe, there are few men in such a situation, but feel an unpleasant sensation during this very awkward ceremony.

remony. It would be better surely, to keep the table wholly to ourselves, than to insult them thus.

I cannot close this chapter without repeating a caution, some hints at which were thrown out in the last. Never suffer yourself to be swayed, by any motive whatever to profess to a young woman of character, more than your integrity can subscribe to. Unfortunately for them, there are a thousand ways to persuade such of your attachment, without the *direct* confession of it; — a thousand attentions, which may reasonably warrant the credulity of a female, without being binding on your part. Such, for instance, as affecting her company in every public place, — being solicitous to shew her every mark of partiality and regard, even at the expence of good manners to others; — seizing every opportunity of drawing her apart from others, — episto-

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lary

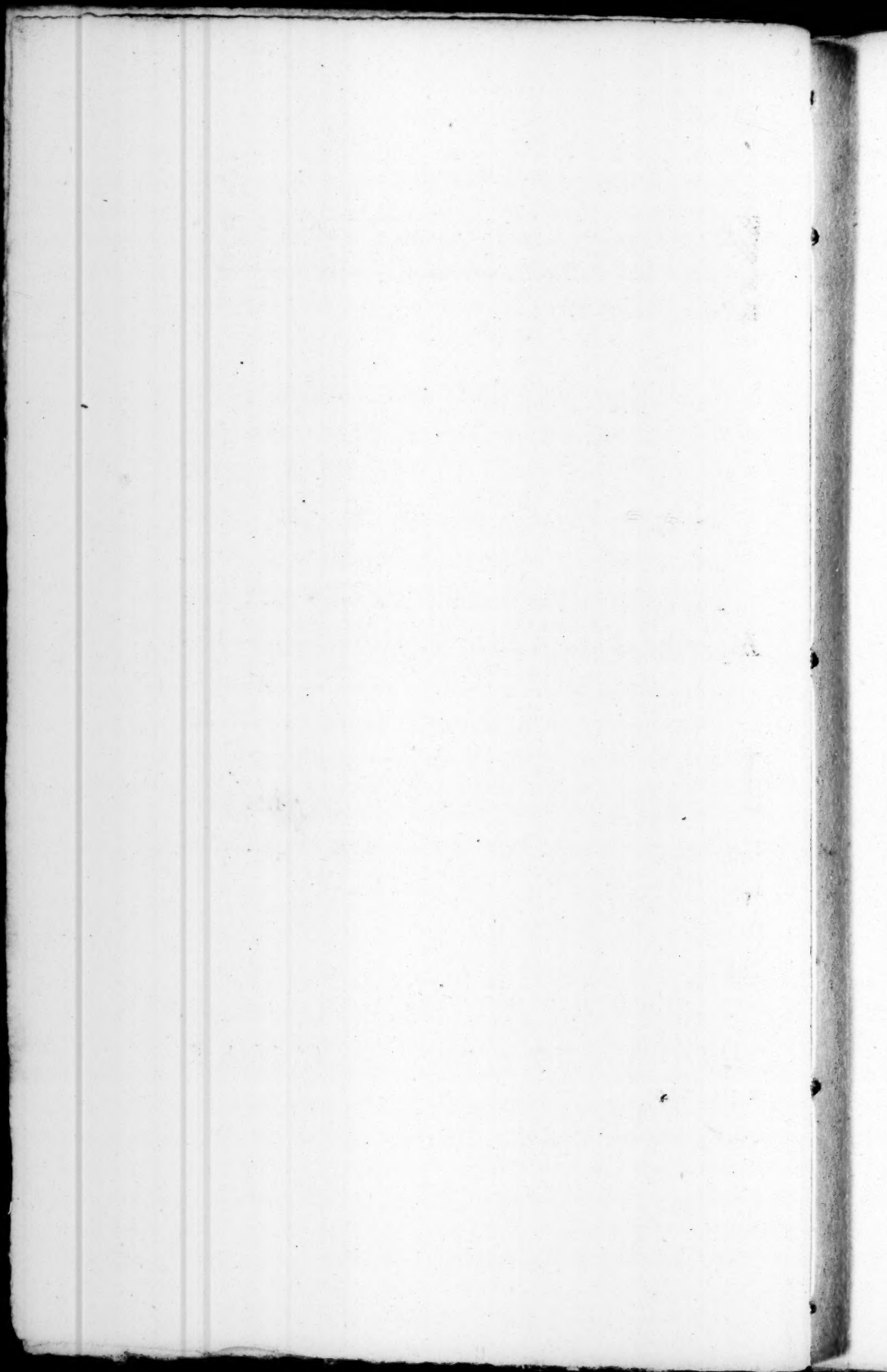
lary correspondence, — all which, with a numerous train of nameless and mysterious modes of conduct, may be practised without once coming to the *direct* proposal. Now these circumstances have a most destructive tendency: they give *us* all the advantage and subject the *fair sex* to a most pitiable *bondage*.

They may *innocently* rely upon such appearance, and yet cannot challenge its *sincerity*: for at his pleasure man forsakes, and leaves them nothing but their anguish and complaint to convince the world they had any rational ground for their delusion.

Can any thing be considered more cruel than such a line of conduct as this? The delicacy of a woman's situation denies her the satisfaction of bringing to an immediate explanation the *first* attention of an admirer: nor is it frequently
revealed

revealed, till, by the imperceptible progress of affection, the disappointment may be injurious.

Taking then into our consideration, the unsuspecting inexperience, and peculiar situation of the female, we must subscribe to this conclusion; that there are very *few* attentions indeed beyond the express limits of friendship and politeness (which have an universal and not partial influence) that a man can blamelessly pay to a modest woman: for he can have no right to injure her peace, or expose her to ridicule, to gratify his personal vanity, or indulge a superficial phantom of his imagination.





CHAP. IV.

PATIENCE.

----- *Animum rege, qui nisi paret
Imperat: hunc frænis, hunc tu compesce
catenâ.* Hor.

I Have been endeavouring to establish a system of conduct, to be strictly attended to, with respect to others; and I should be sorry to leave room for a remark, that I had omitted a very necessary one with respect to ourselves.

Blest with every attainable good, which a comfortable situation in life can procure, few men give themselves the trouble

ble to reflect how very soon, and how very severely, they may be summoned to an opposite condition. To the want of this wholesome reflection, perhaps, we may reasonably ascribe that odious pride, that unbecoming contumacy which inhabit the breasts of the prosperous, to the exclusion of every sentiment of sympathy or goodness. Without profoundly moralizing upon the possibility of such a change, I will take it for granted, that there are few, if asked the question, who would not readily answer that it may one day be their lot: and yet what little pains are we at to fortify our minds against such a contingency, or to increase our compassion towards those, who are visited with it. Abstracted from the positive injunctions of revelation, to patience under adversity or affliction, we are supplied with the strongest motives from the light of our understanding.

One

One great consideration will be, that it is not a partial dispensation, but that affliction in some degree or other, is the universal lot of humanity. A second resource of comfort, is, that by a comparison of calamity, more severities than fall in proportion to our share, are already in the world. —

Many have multiplied to themselves, *expectations*, which their situation could not warrant, and by an eager pursuit after them, set down in case of disappointment as *misfortune*, what can in reason be considered nothing more than a proper and seasonable *check* to their ambition. I am persuaded, that the *imaginary* evils of life outweigh the *real*: for besides that, the immoderate lust of wealth, or power, or fame, fixes in the breast a *present* tormentor, by immediately dislodging that peaceful tenant, content; it entirely poisons all the sources
of

of *future* consolation. Never easy, never settled, the mind is incapable of enjoying the present, lest it should not have its future comforts. Thus distracted, man rushes through a life of insanity, into his grave, without a preparation or prospect beyond it.

He, whose misfortune it is to chill in poverty after having seen his better days, cannot apply to his mind a more successful balm, than the recollection of the condition of millions, who with cheerfulness procure their daily bread, accustomed to the *apparent* hardships of poverty. I am aware that I shall here be accused of preaching a doctrine which is difficult to be reduced to practice, yet I believe it very possible for a well-informed mind to avoid creating uneasiness and wants, which every day he sees are not absolutely *necessary*, to the support and even satisfaction of others, who
are

are destitute of the advantages which his understanding furnishes him with. An eminent author observes, that “ the little
“ stream which is left will suffice to
“ quench the thirst of nature ; and that
“ which cannot be quenched by it, is
“ not your thirst, but your distemper :
“ a distemper formed by the vicious
“ habits of your mind.” By a fair degree of comparison, we must bear our sufferings with patience and resignation. The reflection of past sufferings will greatly contribute to disarm the future. If they have been grievous, let the remembrance of them be profitable. When we consider, that like the storms of the natural world, they have collected their force and spent their fury, and at length yielded to perfect composure and serenity, we must be comforted and encouraged.
“ He must blush to sink under the anguish of one wound, who surveys a
“ body seamed over with the scars of
T “ many

‘ many; and who has come victorious
“ out of all the conflicts wherein he re-
“ ceived them. Let sighs and tears and
“ fainting under the lightest strokes of
“ adverse fortune, be the portion of those
“ unhappy people, whose tender minds
“ a long course of felicity has enervated.
“ Believe me, the providence of God
“ has established such an order in the
“ world, that of all which belongs to
“ us the least valuable parts can alone
“ fall under the will of others. What-
“ ever is best is safest, lies out of the
“ reach of human power; can neither
“ be given nor taken away. Such is the
“ mind of man.

It certainly lies in our own breasts
whether the strokes of calamity shall fall
upon us armed with excruciating pangs,
or altogether harmless. It is the effect
of our own feelings, whether they can
make us miserable or not. If we are
broken

broken hearted at the loss of property, we plainly confess, that the possession of it could not have endued us with solid happiness; and so on, with almost every occurrence in life.

The loss of relatives, or friends, must in a mind of sensibility, occasion the keenest sorrow; but nevertheless when we reject all consolation, and imagine our own sufferings are dealt out to us with a merciless hand; or that the common feelings of humanity are dissimilar on this point, we offer a violence to that majesty of reason, which is to distinguish us from the inferiour parts of the creation.

Again, with respect to pain or sickness, our earliest acquaintance with human nature furnishes us, if not with a remedy against, at least with a check to our repining. From the dawn of life, to the close of it, we find uneasiness of mind

or body, the invariable condition of our station. " The darts of adverse fortune
" are always levelled at our heads. Some
" reach us, some graze against us. Let
" us therefore impose an equal temper
" on our minds, and pay without murmuring the tribute which we owe to
" humanity. The best resolution we
" can take is to pursue, without repining, the road which Providence, who
" directs every thing, has marked out
" for us: for it is not enough to follow:
" and he is but a bad foldier, who fights
" and marches on with reluctance."

" Why should we grieve, when grieving we
must bear,
" Or take with guilt, what guiltless we might
share ?"

By climate, by constitution, by change of seasons, by casualties, our health and safety, are in perpetual alarm. By oppression, by disappointment, by fraud,
by

by violence, by treachery, our property we cannot positively call our own. By relation, by connection, by society, our affections are irresistibly engaged in such a multitude of enjoyments, that the frequent demands of death must deprive us of some of them. If we sum up then this variety of disasters approaching us in their multitudinous forms, and take into the account the “*plurima mortis imago*,”* with respect to ourselves, what is there left of such inestimable tenure, as to occasion those extravagant repinings and fretful dispositions of mankind, which so effectually lessen the consequence of our nature?

But above all other considerations, the satisfaction of a good conscience will provide us with constancy and equanimity.†

- - - - - “*Hic munus aheneus esto*
“*Nil conscire sibi, nullâ pallefcere culpâ!*”

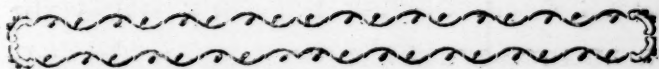
* Vir. *Ænid.* lib. 2, 369.

† Hor. *Epist.* lib. 1.

Thus

Thus much with respect to the light of our understanding: how much less excusable must we account ourselves, indulged as we are with the mildest persuasives to resignation, under the calamities of life, in the oracle of OMNISCIENCE and TRUTH? We are without excuse if we are not to be won by such precepts, and animated by such examples.

CHAP.



CHAP. V.

AFFECTATION.

Aliorum naturam imitans omittas tuam.

CICERO.

THE native ornaments of the mind are of themselves so pleasant to the eye of the observer, that all attempt at borrowed lustre offends and disgusts. It resembles the artificial display of beauty which generally overblossoms the modesty of nature, and instead of improving corrodes and destroys every charm she had bestowed. The admiration of which dies upon reflection as certainly as the borrowed bloom fades upon the pillow. Not thus the charm of nature: the brilliant colouring which she spreads upon the healthful
cheek

cheek of innocence not only rivets the enraptured eye at the moment but deepens in the memory with delight and satisfaction. So will the unfettered workings of the mind win upon the attention, command a confidence and applause when the tutored refinements of blandishment will be regarded only with suspicion and distrust. It does not however follow, that to be open and ingenuous, a man must necessarily be uncourteous or unpolished. True refinement does not conceal or change the mind, it is designed only to display it to greater advantage. Its allurements, its feelings, its powers, its virtues are its own, underived from *situation* of life, and alike in the possession of the courtier and the cottager. The difference only is this. The polish of education like the skill of an artist clears the gem from its unnecessary and superfluous qualities, arranges its properties which were before concealed, draws forth
its

its lustre to immediate observation, and leaves not a single quality undisplayed.

Affectation then is unnatural, and therefore unpleasant. To assume a mode of thinking, speaking or deportment not entirely and sincerely our own, to lay aside our valuable reason and to torture every sense and every feature both of body and mind when all the world but ourselves shall discover the delusion, is ridiculous in the extreme. Appear what you are. Let nothing tempt you to assume the foibles, much less the vices of other men: though they come arrayed in the most bewitching forms to your view, behold them as they really are, vices and foibles. They may perhaps sit easy on their possessor for the reason I have before mentioned, because they are natural to them; but that will not be the case with you, they are copied and that is sufficient to betray them. From vices

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and

and foibles few men are exempt, and none but fools would be weak enough to adopt those of another.

We are all too apt to forget that wholesome adage, "all is not gold which glitters," else how are we to account for that unconquerable affectation of situations and employments, which evidently subjugate their votaries to the most mortifying penance and fatigue? Hence we see, not only in younger, but in more advanced life, characters the least calculated of all others to obtain the object of their pursuit; yet, voluntarily bending to the yoke and blindly submitting to the derision and contempt of every observer. Amongst these, we may rank those candidates for admiration, who having been severally denied by nature the advantages of elegance in their person and manners, the brilliancy of genius and education, the endowments of vivacity and wit, or vigour of constitution, have
notwith-

notwithstanding impetuously rushed forward to render their wants conspicuous. It is no uncommon observation, that the person who is deficient in elegance of form will affect to outstrip every other by the most extravagant display of the prevailing fashion of the time, though it shall notoriously mark his defects, when a modest forbearance might have concealed them. It is just so with the superficial prater. He will be the first to expose his own barrenness of understanding, by rushing into the prevailing prejudice of the hour and deciding upon productions which he never was at the pains to peruse, or by censuring oratory or compositions as high above his capacity as his malice. Sometimes he will betray himself, by affecting public situations, and therein stunning and confounding his audience by incoherent ungrammatical and endless debate. We may then take notice of the third class,

whom we shall find substituting pun for wit, and lest the brilliancy of it should escape his companions, will be the first and loudest to applaud it.

But what occasions the most surprize, is, that they to whom nature has been sparing in health and strength, should nevertheless, in the heyday of their blood, so affect that excessive degree of pleasure in drinking deep, and the several appendages to conviviality and mirth, as to put it in the power of a shattered constitution, most materially suffering upon every such occasion, to give them the lie. There can be none other cause, in all these several cases, than the most consummate vanity and unpardonable obstinacy.

Ingenuofness of disposition will always find its way, affectation for ever destroy its own intent. Is it not strange
that

that human nature should be so blind and unguarded, as to imagine the fantastic airs and privileged follies of rank, will be viewed with *equal temper*, when they are affected in the distorted manners of middle life? To copy the actions of the great and good, is indeed to improve with considerable advantage what talents are committed to our trust; but to copy the appearance only, is like fixing a star upon the habit of a mechanic, to draw the attention and excite the ridicule of passers by. Emulation is one thing, affectation another. This follows the shadow, that the substance. This aims at the precarious admiration of superficial remark, that at the solid advantage of improvement, which commands applause.

The ingenuous mind, like the clear stream, faithfully reflects the chearful sunshine and the blackening storm. It
is

is exposed to all, it reflects all : but its course is uninterrupted and its purity traced to its very source.

Affectation, like a standing pool in the sunshine, is satisfied with its glittering surface, 'till upon examination, you turn from it disgusted with its quality, which however pure in itself, is contaminated with dregs and mixtures not its own.

Nothing marks so strongly the deformity of any favourite foible, as viewing it attentively in the deportment or conduct of others. Try affectation upon this plan.

You observe when in company with MATILDA, that she has an impediment or hesitation in her speech, and now and then lisps, which she evidently takes no pains to correct, or she would check the
rapidity

rapidity of her words. You naturally regard this as a misfortune. It is no such thing. It is her study. Follow her out of company into her family, and she speaks as plainly and clearly as you do. It is reasonable to enquire into the cause of this. Thus we the resolve, the honourable Mrs. D - - - - - , her idol, whom she imagines can do no wrong, and whose very weakness and failings are ornaments worthy imitation, has really, what Matilda considers a *delightful* and *engaging* defect in her utterance; and of course to be like her, the voice which nature has kindly afforded Matilda, free from blemish, is chained up by the science of servile imitation. Again, there is the lovely HARRIET, who lately left Nottingham, with as fine a shape and natural deportment as ever graced a female, now by the absolute dominion of habit, labours with such a weakness in her hips, that she can scarcely walk an hundred yards.

yards without fatigue, and bends forward with such a seeming uneasiness as though unable to stand upright; yet this is but affected in compliment to the infirmity of the COUNTESS who kindly introduces her into life.

These, and a multitude of other instances of vitiated fancy, are to be lamented in the manners of the female world of affectation. — Now consult it in the other.

Your friend SEYMOUR is a very studious man, but he is not satisfied with knowledge, he must appear to the world studious; to this end he affects the constant use of spectacles, is never to be seen without them, except when he has been unwittingly surprized reading in his study with his glasses on the table; or left them by mistake when called up earlier than usual. This affectation I
can

can account for in the recollection of the doctor his Tutor, whose weakness of sight obliged him to use them, and hence I suppose the imagined appearance of study and wisdom in the pupil.

You may remember THEODORE, who, when he had scarcely emerged from the confines of twenty, assumed a mode of thinking and conversing so perfectly stoical, accompanied with a *suitable* neglect of the person, and pretended contempt for all the vivacity and native enjoyments of youth, as to astonish, not to say, disgust all his acquaintance. Nay, to such extent did his passion for singularity indulge itself, that the youthful part of his friends, who had *ridiculously* complied with the several customs of their coævals, was sure of his censure and raillery. Suspicion had long regarded him with a watchful eye, and soon surpris'd him in the private enjoy-

X

ment

ment of pleasures which his publick voice had affected to despise. This was ground sufficient to imagine that every other pretence to singularity was the offspring of affectation. And so they were, for to our surprize and entertainment, he is at this instant absolutely involved in one of the *last misfortunes* which he thought could befall his friends, and that is, *Matrimony*. Such is affectation.

Besides these particular instances which have no shadow of excuse for their adoption, look at both sexes who are in the vale of years, and observe with what an ill grace, many of them bear their venerable honours; as though ashamed of the gravity of dress and deportment, suitable to their years, will they distance even their children in the career of ridicule; the valuable part of the day being wholly engrossed in making up an appearance,

for the hand of scorn

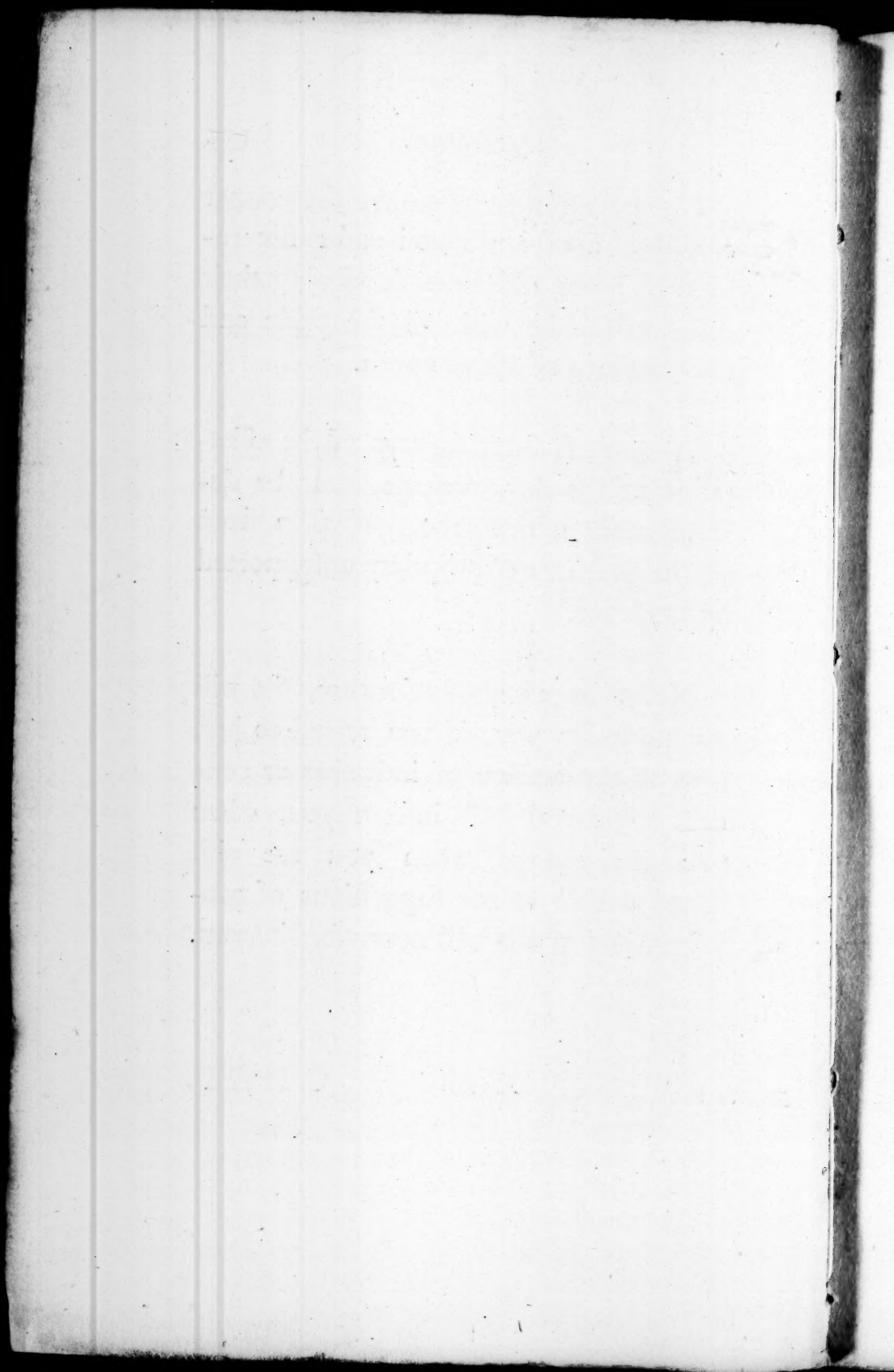
To point his slow and moving finger at.

Shakespeare.

Our young men assuming the copper complexion of hardihood and rustic robustness : our old ones decorating their enfeebled limbs with all the pride and circumstance of active youth.

From these short surveys of the affectation of the day, perhaps, may be derived more useful reflection, than from all the doctrines of propriety unsupported by evidence.

Never be ashamed of nature, she will do more for you, if you attend to her, than all the artifice of imitation or conceit. She will best inform you, when you are young, when you are old. Yield at least to her suggestions of propriety, and reason will never forsake you.





CHAP. VI.

P L E A S U R E

A N D

A M U S E M E N T S.

*Si ad naturam vives, nunquam eris pauper ;
si ad opinionem, nunquam dives. Ex-
iguum natura desiderat, opinio immen-
sum.* Seneca.

SOME degree of leisure, how unequal soever the proportion may be, falls to the lot of most; and there are but few people who have not some moments they can call their own.

The

The happy provision for sweetening moments such as these is the common solicitude of all. It is in other words, that earthly happiness, which next to health most engages our attention. According therefore to the natural bent of the inclination, or prejudice of habit, we see the thousand beaten paths, filled with the motley tribes, all directed to that one central point. Each has its peculiar allurements, and each its corresponding difficulty and distress: few, very few indeed, have been able to reach it, and these not without the utmost exertions of patience and moderation.

True pleasure, universally considered, is not to be defined, since it varies as to its mode, with every taste, humour, and inclination of man;* but its effect is ultimately

* All good, even seen and confessed to be so, does not necessarily move every particular man's desire

ultimately seated in the mind: the better information of that, by whatever plan conveyed, must render it capable of receiving, as well as yield it, more enjoyment.

Reading, in this point of view, with all its degrees of attention, from the mere killing of an hour, to the profoundest study, has its intrinsic value; since publications are abroad, calculated for every capacity, alluring to every fancy, and replete with the self same sentiments, as well *unadorned* in some, as *dignified* in all the imagery of stile in *others*. I would not be understood here, to include all the *licentious* trash, with which our public libraries abound, to the success of which, by the immoderate lust of perusal, the characters,

desire, but only that part, or so much of it, as is considered and taken to make a necessary part of his happiness. All other good, however great in reality or appearance, excites not a man's desires, who looks not on it to make a part of that happiness, wherewith he in his present thoughts, can satisfy himself.

Locke.

characters, fortunes, and I may add, lives, of thousands have been sacrificed. The desire of knowledge is almost an universal principle, and only checked by the labour of acquisition.* The generality of mankind,

* “ The love of history seems inseparable from
 “ human nature, because it seems inseparable
 “ from self love. Rude heaps of stones have been
 “ raised, and ruder hymns have been composed,
 “ for this purpose, by nations who had not yet
 “ the use of arts and letters. To go no further
 “ back, the triumphs of ODIN, were celebrated
 “ in runic songs, and the feats of our british
 “ ancestors, were recorded in those of their bards.
 “ The savages of America have the same custom
 “ at this day ; and long historical ballads of their
 “ huntings and their wars, are sung at all their
 “ festivals. There is no need of saying how this
 “ passion grows among civilized nations, in pro-
 “ portion to the means of gratifying it : but let
 “ us observe, that the same principle of nature
 “ directs us as strongly, and more generally, as
 “ well as more early, to indulge our own curi-
 “ osity, instead of preparing to gratify that of
 “ others. The child hearkens with delight to
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young man who has any wish to cultivate his understanding, to refine, or to reform his manners; in short, who has any wish to be esteemed by the world, or considered as any thing above a cypher in it:— who is desirous of receiving any solid pleasure beyond the extacy of a moment, or any satisfaction among the common amusements of the world, must, though he put a constraint upon his inclination for a season, most rigidly select those authors only, which his unbiaſſed reason will approve. He will soon acquire a taste for them, and, doubtless, will receive at once improvement and enjoyment. As I mean to confine myself to that line of pleasure and amusement, in which the *mind* is the chief beneficiary, you will not expect me to recommend any, in which her welfare is not the *chief* object. — I shall of course pass over every species of fashionable amusement, from that inveteracy of gaming, where fortunes depend

depend on the cast of a die, to the mildest insipidity of a game at whist, which rescues the circle from a torrent of defamation, or what may be as likely, from the vacant hours of dulness between tea and supper.

Public places of amusement, so long as they are frequented with moderation, are admirable in their effect. But never strain your taste beyond your understanding, by resorting to entertainments in any language, with which you have no acquaintance, yet nothing is more common than this. What would become of the italian opera, if the audience were composed of real connoisseurs alone? such however is the vanity of the age, that a box at the opera-house is become as necessary an appendage to a family of taste as their carriage.

Notwithstanding the ebullitions of the splenetic and morose, I most heartily concur in opinion with those who have ranked the *stage* among the beneficial amusements of the mind. There is nothing which so effectually operates to the conviction of a man's folly or vice, as the unexpected representation of his own identical character in a play. The several situations into which it is thrown, display to his astonished and fixed attention the several points of view in which he is himself beheld by *others*, whether of aversion, ridicule or compassion. He begins to feel for himself: — his whole soul takes the alarm, and what before appeared to him *pardonable* as a *frailty*, or below the notice of society, glows in the canvas as abounding with much mischief either to himself or those about him. It has been well observed, that
 “ a passion which lies dormant in the
 “ heart, and has escaped our scrutiny;
 “ or

“ or which we have observed and indulged as venial, or which we have perhaps encouraged as a principle to excite and to aid our virtue, may one time or other destroy our tranquility, and disgrace our whole character.”

The nicer minutiae of his character, which the strictest self examination could not discover, and which the warmest of his friends cared not to disclose, assume so hateful a form, as would make him disbelieve his portrait, did not the intimate and corresponding memory, produce action for action and thought for thought.

The purity of the moral character must not, however, be unnecessarily exposed to danger. The drama has its utility, but it abounds likewise with mischief. Too great a fondness for the levity of the stage, the sprightly disguiser of prophaneness, obscenity, and licentiousness,

tioufness, under the specious forms of wit or repartee, may be big with evil:— the mind otherwise fortified, may be diverted into an habitual fondness for such scenes, till it shall imperceptibly shake off all regard for the moments which are sacred to seriousness and reflection.

To indulge the natural vivacity of youth, in the occasional recourse to comedy, well selected, cannot but be just; tho' the greatest advantages are unquestionably derived from the tragic muse. She at once breathes instruction and delight:— instruction to the heart, — delight to the fancy. She is naturally enrobed in sublimity of stile as well as purity of sentiment:— the scholar and the christian seldom are offended at her.

The same distinction, which I would exercise in *public* representation, maintains its efficacy in the *closet*. The heart
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is as much exposed in the *perusal* as in the *exhibition*: as capable of receiving bad impressions in the *closet*, as in the *theatre*: hence the choice of reading must be attended to. The *benefits* of dramatic reading are likewise great. It is very certain, that our minds are more apt to be captivated by the effusions of fancy, than by the serious suggestions of reason. We are delighted at a fictitious tale of woe, well conceived and finely described: situations though unreal, will provoke our merriment, even beyond our belief. Thus it is, that as the avenues to our hearts are laid open by our imagination, we more frequently receive instruction *unawares*, than when instruction was *intended*: — a successful sentiment has amended a life, as it were by *stratagem*, which as a *sentiment* would have been treated with inattention, if not ridicule.

Relax-

Relaxation from the ordinary fatigues of life, like the affectation of pleasures, is conveyed through a variety of channels, according to the several tempers, habits and constitutions of mankind. It is found in solitude and in society, in study and in conversation. The great often look for it by affecting the retirement of the cottage, and the mechanic by aping the magnificence of the great. The pensive man enjoys his solitary hour with a peculiar kind of enthusiasm; the lively man with equal enjoyment waits with impatience for the social: and, notwithstanding the well apportioned lots of comfort to each, how frequently do we behold each man's wilful ignorance, or neglect of what is calculated to make him happy. The great, wearied out with the endless succession of pageantry and splendor, fancy nothing can effectually contribute to their solid enjoyment, but the envied retirement of innocence
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and humility. Hence, palaces assume the *externals* at least of *cottages*, and their lords wish in vain for the *peaceful slumber* of the *cottager*.

Were we permitted to dictate here, we need not the most accurate knowledge of the world to tell them, that the perfectly wise and benevolent Author of all, however apparently disproportioned the good and evil of this world may be, has manifestly distributed happiness with a more equal hand; and that the peasant, though he is destitute of the power of the courtier, has ample amends allotted him, in the circumscription of his wishes, and the retrospect of a blameless life.

The man of business, with a propensity bordering on madness, affects to rear his diminished head, amid the splendid circles of the noble and independent, and imagines the greatest reward of his toil

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to consist in being able to follow, at humble distance, the footsteps of nobility; forgetting, that the *uncultivation* of his *earlier* years has left behind the most palpable tokens of his insufficiency to move in such a sphere, which must necessarily render him the sport of his equals, and expose him to the commiseration of those above him.

Perhaps there is no greater disappointment on earth than that, which multitudes of the commercial and trading part of the world experience, when the long wished for day arrives, which, they fondly imagine, is to place them above the reach of the world, and conduct them with a comfortable independence into an indolent retirement, as an unfailing meed of their unabating industry.

That very industry shall occasion their disappointment. Inured to fatigue, and
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the perpetual employ either of body or mind, their days have glided on with health and chearfulness.—The scene is on a sudden changed; no occupation pleading necessity, inclination is languid, and indulgence gains strength; it gives the bed and the couch charms and attractions unknown before:—the vacant hour “drags its slow length along,” and the man of industry falls a victim to accumulating diseases, melancholy and sloth.

I knew PROSPERO well: he began a life of commerce with a disposition admirable suited to his station, he was industrious, honest, generous, and affable; a few years procured for him the esteem of every one, who was happy enough to know him, and by an uniform attention, in a short time he found himself a wealthy man. Having lost a beloved wife, who had made him father of three children, all of whom were of an age safely to be

left to themselves, he was soon diverted from the often tried pleasures of his accounting-house, to the fancied delight of leaving off trade.

To this end were his whole concerns centered in a few acres of cultivated land, in a most delightful situation, far from the noise and perplexity of the capital. Every article which had *engrossed* his former attention was as industriously *avoided*; and, trade once forsaken, an entire new scheme was substituted to charm the few remaining years, which Providence might grant him. Every thing was procured which he wanted, or *thought* he wanted, to render these his *latter* days of life most happy. A very few months, however, perfectly convinced him how very inadequate his disposition was to such enjoyments. The face of Nature, which to *occasional* and *temporary* retirement, had yielded charms of pleasing variety,

variety, and wholesome rest, to a *constant* observer, like a familiar beauty, faded upon the fatiated enjoyment. He knew not, or relished not, the happy recourse to his library, in unpleasant weather; or to the sports, to which the peculiarly happy chosen spot of his residence invited him, at the several seasons of rural enjoyment.

Scarcely a twelvemonth had elapsed, before he too sensibly perceived the canker, melancholy, preying upon his very existence; and he would unquestionably have died, but for the exertions of a near relation, who persuaded him to return to that scene of traffic, which was so congenial with his happiness. He did so, and could not afterwards be prevailed upon to revisit those pleasing scenes, which would ever have delighted him, had he been content with temporary and stated visits.

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We ought to be very prudent in those determinations which are calculated for our happiness or enjoyments. If we are not obstinately blind, most of us can trace the real bent of our minds. The man, who has scarcely ever been *out* of company, must be mad to suppose that happiness awaits him in a kind of artificial monastic seclusion: so, on the other hand, the recluse must know, it is not possible for him to enjoy those scenes, which exclude thought and contemplation.

SOLITUDE, sought with prudence, is at once beneficial and delightful; and though it may be pursued till it has involved some in a *noxious gloom*, and *dangerous melancholy*, yet there are but very few situations, in which a good mind can receive the satisfaction which it finds in solitude. The contemplation of visible objects raises the thought, with
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a most delightful gradation, to that INVISIBLE AUTHOR, whose power is equalled only by his Mercy. Not a leaf, nor a plant, escapes the inquisitive soul, and unlike other speculations, the very enquiry is itself the gratification.

When I speak of pleasure in solitude, of amusements in the works of nature, I fancy myself speaking only to such, whose minds are not so much warped by the prevailing dissipations of the day, as to think on God, or behold his works with *indifference*: the attention of any who are thus senseless I cannot hope to engage; nor indeed could I be honoured by their approbation. Retirement naturally teaches the mind to investigate itself; and though it may not be able to define its nature, yet it will hereby improve its talents. If the retrospect of past actions is somewhat obscured, this salutary visit may render the future pleasing by a chain of virtuous resolutions; but, if the
retrospect

retrospect be unclouded, it is not in the power of language to describe that enviable enjoyment, self applause.

I cannot help, I confess, remarking one never failing source of study and satisfaction, which constantly follows me into retirements, such as these: which is the succession of the seasons, so descriptive of the life of man. According to the season I feel the variety of admiration, joy, depression, or sorrow, and, without attempting a wide display of the analogy, I view the infant mind budding forth with all the bloom of an indulgent spring. I trace it through the ripening rays of summer suns, mellowed into a settled judgment, and abounding with all its valuable possessions, under the auspices of an autumnal sky: and last of all I mourn its departure under the chilling reign of winter; yet, happy, as considering it waiting for the arrival of ETERNAL SPRING.

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The analogous ideas, which are necessarily involved in this metaphor, are numberless and striking, and may be indulged with infinite advantage.

Constitution, however, varies the enjoyment, and lest I should be suspected of preferring solitude to society, it will be proper to turn to this. That man must be indeed lost to himself, who can imagine the human mind formed for contemplation *alone*; its variety of emotions, affections and passions, teach us to seek our happiness by social intercourse; hence then, SOCIETY must delight, SOCIETY must improve.

In a former chapter I have endeavoured to establish the necessity of our social intercourse in the world, I therefore shall not be very prolix here upon that part of our subject. Nevertheless I cannot lose sight of the several pleasures and advantages which we naturally derive

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from the occasional society of our inferiours, as well as our superiours.

It is a common maxim in the world, that for our temporal advantage, we should study to frequent the company of every order of mankind, who are our superiours in point of precedency. Now, though I most warmly admit the propriety of the remark, and would not wish to discountenance a plan so generally beneficial, yet I can by no means give up the satisfaction, which a well informed mind will always enjoy in the company of its virtuous inferiours.

The supposed privilege of being familiar with persons above our situation, frequently excites an infatuation, of which we can by no means divest ourselves. We are dazzled by appearance, and cannot sufficiently settle our ideas to form our judgment, how far we are commendable

mendable in our acquaintance. The gratification of our vanity blinds our reason. The foibles, nay vices, which wear so splendid an outside, being sanctified by custom, do not rouse our indignation, and we are apt to impute to our *charity*, what is the unequivocal evidence of our *servility*. With our inferiors we are not only more just in our opinion, but too frequently more severe: unadorned, unmasked, unprotected, their follies and their indiscretions need only to be noticed to incur our reprehension, and it must be a *virtue indeed* in them, which can challenge our admiration and applause.

The pleasures and advantages which are to be derived from the society of our inferiours, will chiefly consist in the artless effusions of an honest mind: perhaps a sentiment of simplicity, which falls in an unexpected moment from the lips of a

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rustic

rustic, the child of nature and humanity, may put the man of education to the blush; but at the same profitable moment, will convey a cordial to his heart. It will contain in substance what whole pages of laboured study have failed to produce, and his uniformity of practice will teach him what he could not find in the cloister of his college.

Truly to define pleasure and amusement is according to the practice of the world, to paint them as they severally engage the attention of mankind. Every amusement, with which either the metropolis or the country abounds, may be pursued to excess, abused to the most mischievous purposes, and prove the introductory allurements to our very destruction; or on the other hand, they may be engaged in with prudence, to soften the rigour of a too close application either to study or business.—No man, for instance, would consider himself safe, when

when he beheld himself, on a sudden, involved in the big fate of the turn of a card, and surrounded by a swarm of sharpers: yet he may consider the occasional resource to cards as a recreation, at once grateful to his feelings, and not mischievous to his property. Both, however strictly speaking, come under the title of gaming; the one in the degree, the other in the extreme. In short, every kind of recreation ceases to be substantial, ceases to be desirable, from that very moment in which it introduces us to situations which will not bear reflection.

When once our reason is insulted, and we discover ourselves to have been the slaves of another's passions, or of our own, however gratifying the moments may have been, we have too much cause to think that time mispent. The mind will always buoy up above the gratifications of sensuality; in vain we shall attempt to engage it in our pursuits, and
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to make it a partner in such our enjoyments. With a miraculous obstinacy, it not only abjures the connection, but, unsolicited, and against our very consent, will goad us with its seasonable reproofs. Without entering into a wide display of the excruciating evils, attendant upon irregularities in every kind of debauchery, it will suffice that I say a word or two upon that very dangerous one, at which you must perceive I am pointing, the society of immodest women. Intemperance of this nature is big with the most alarming mischiefs; and it matters not, in point of safety to our morality, whether our commerce is with the splendid tenant of an expensive dwelling, or the more pitiable object of occasional resort. Both partake of iniquity; both are dangerous to our peace. Their unequal *situation* may present them with unequal *temptations*; but in point of morality, they are *equally* to be avoided.

Before

Before I conclude, I will draw out at length an extract from that *sublime poem*, the PARADISE LOST of MILTON, which will very properly apply to the present subject.

- “ - - - - What admir’st thou, what transports
thee so,
“ An outside ? fair no doubt and worthy well
“ Thy cherishing, thy honouring and thy love,
“ Not thy subjection : weigh with her thyself :
“ Then value : Oft’ times nothing profits more
“ Than self esteem, grounded on just and right
“ Well manag’d : of that skill the more thou
know’st,
“ The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
“ And to realities yield all her shows :
“ Made so adorn, for thy delight the more,
“ So awful, that with honour thou may’st love
“ Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least
wife.
“ But if the sense - - - - -
“ - - - - seem such dear delight
“ Beyond all other, think the same vouchsaf’d
“ To cattle and each beast : which wou’d not be
“ To them made common and divulg’d, if ought
“ Therein

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“ Therein enjoy’d were worthy to subdue
“ The soul of man, or passion in him move.
“ What higher in her society thou find’st
“ Attractive, human, rational, love still,
“ In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
“ Wherein true love consists not: Love refines
“ The thought, and heart enlarges, hath his seat
“ In reason, and is judicious, is the scale
“ By which to heav’nly love thou may’st ascend,
“ Not sunk in carnal pleasures, for which cause
“ Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.”

I have already observed, that it is not my intention to enter upon the more trifling enjoyments, of which the mind of man is capable; I have treated in a general way, of the several resources which seem to me profitable and innocent. Those which respect our bodily exercise and health merely, will not be looked for in this well intended effort of affection, but will fall with a better grace from the pen of the physician.

F I N I S.

